

Proposed regulation by FAA closes human factors loophole

The US FAA is proposing to close a human factors loophole in the regulations governing the certification of transport category aircraft with increasingly advanced-technology integrated flight decks.

In a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to be issued on 3 February, the agency calls for creating more explicit requirements for "design attributes" related to "managing and avoiding" pilot errors, including being able to detect and recover from keypad errors.

"In hindsight of analysis of accidents, incidents or other events of interest, these deviations might include: an inappropriate action, a difference for what is expected in a procedure, a mistaken decision, a slip of the fingers in typing, an omission of some kind, and many other examples," says the agency in the NPRM.

The regulatory upgrade is largely ceremonial from a safety standpoint, as existing European Aviation Safety Agency regulations already require such human factors considerations.

From a financial aspect though, the FAA says harmonizing the certification requirements of the two countries will "provide economic benefits from reduced joint certification costs brought about by a reduction in data collection and analysis and by a reduction in the paperwork and time required in the certification process".

Source: Air Transport Intelligence news