European Union Aviation Safety Agency

Obsolescence of Spare Parts for Products No Longer in Production

Spare parts obsolescence refers to situations where replacement parts for a product are no longer manufactured or supported by the original supply chain. This is particularly common for products that are no longer in production.

Does continuing airworthiness require a Type Certificate Holder (TCH) to ensure manufacturing spare parts indefinitely?

Answer

No. Continuing airworthiness obligations (as per EASA Part 21) do not necessarily imply an obligation for the TCH to sustain production of spare parts indefinitely. In many cases, the product may have been out of production for decades, and maintaining the industrial capability to manufacture certain parts may no longer be economically or technically sustainable.

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https://www.easa.europa.eu/en/faq/143667

Is Part 21 intended to regulate long-term production sustainability?

Answer

Part 21 primarily establishes the regulatory framework for certification, design, and production approvals. It is not intended to regulate commercial or industrial decisions related to sustaining spare parts production over the long term.

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How can operators address spare parts obsolescence? Can another Design

Organisation Approval holder support the design and production of obsolete spare parts?

Answer

Yes. Subject to the applicable approval pathways, another DOA holder with the appropriate scope of work, sufficient access to the design data and an adequate production interface can support the development, approval and supply chain of alternative solutions through changes to the type certificate. Refer to **List of all EASA DOA approvals** under Design Organisations Approvals | EASA.

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Does spare parts obsolescence automatically constitute an unsafe condition?

Answer

No. Obsolescence in itself does not automatically result in an unsafe condition. However, it may become a contributing factor to operational or maintenance risks if suitable mitigation measures are not available

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Should spare parts obsolescence be considered within a Safety Management System (SMS)?

Answer

Yes. From an SMS perspective, spare parts obsolescence may be treated as a potential hazard that should be assessed and monitored. This relates both to the TC Holder and operator of the aircraft. The associated risks depend on factors such as operational exposure, availability of alternatives, and maintenance strategies.

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