The Advanced Qualification Program

FAA Lessons Learned From 20 Years of AQP

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By: Dr. Doug Farrow, Program Manager, AQP
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Overview

• What is the Advanced Qualification Program (AQP)?
• Why was the program implemented?
• What are the program’s main features?
• How do the regulatory and voluntary programs interface?
• What lessons has the FAA learned?
• What is the future of FAA training?
What is the Advanced Qualification Program (AQP)?

- The FAA AQP Rule, 14 CFR, Part 121 Subpart Y, allows an alternative means of regulatory compliance for air carrier training.
- Alternate means of compliance are authorized, so long as the AQP alternative is demonstrated to be as safe as, or safer than, the traditional requirement.
Why was the Program Implemented?

• By the late 1980’s, human error had emerged as the primary cause of US air carrier accidents.

• The FAA and industry agreed that more flexible training regulations would allow a more creative response to this new threat.

• The FAA adopted a modified version of the then-current military training methods based on front-end task analysis and back-end data analysis: AQP.
What are the Program’s Main Features?

- Participation is voluntary and can be terminated by the carrier or the FAA.
- A systems approach must be applied to the analysis, design, development, implementation, operation and evaluation of all training.
- De-identified performance data must be shared with the FAA.
How do the regulatory and voluntary programs interface?

• AQP is a voluntary means of compliance with a regulatory requirement to qualify, train, certify and otherwise assure the competence of pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers.

• If an airline goes AQP, all fleets go AQP.

• Under future FAA Safety Management Systems (SMS) regulations, many of the current AQP components will be integrated into traditional training programs.
What Lessons has the FAA Learned?

- Maintaining two sets of training regulations has allowed and encouraged voluntary participants to exceed FAA standards.
- AQP did not realize it’s full potential until training data analysis was meshed with operational safety data analysis.
- A dedicated FAA Headquarters Office was critical to the success of AQP.
What Lessons has the FAA Learned?

• “AQP is not for everyone”.
• Flight Attendant and Dispatcher AQP’s have challenges beyond Pilot AQP’s.
• Independent analysis of air carrier AQP data by the FAA is a critical quality control step.
• Instructor and Evaluator calibration training is mandatory.
• Instructors and Evaluators are the key to a successful AQP.
What Lessons has the FAA Learned?

- Joint approval by both headquarters and field offices is essential.
- Independent training centers have not elected to offer AQP training programs.
- Few international carriers have adopted US style AQP programs.
- Advances in AQP have not spread to non-AQP carriers.
What Lessons has the FAA Learned?

- Annual information sharing meetings including all participants has been vital in spreading the latest innovations in AQP.
What is the Future of FAA Training?

• The percentage of pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers in AQP will continue to increase.

• The FAA will continue to maintain two sets of training regulations.

• A single program office will coordinate and issue guidance on AQP, CRM and LOS (Line Operational Simulation).
What is the Future of FAA Training?

• AQP is now spreading rapidly through the regional air carrier community, bringing new challenges, to include less experienced pilots.

• AQP, like all the FAA’s data-driven voluntary safety programs, will form the major building blocks of future FAA-approved Safety Management Systems at the airlines.
Questions?

• Dr. Douglas R. Farrow
• Program Manager, AQP
• douglas.farrow@faa.gov