tasks, the FAA has determined that a level of safety will be maintained that is equivalent to the level of safety provided when a certificated mechanic performs the maintenance.

Granting the authority for pilots to perform the above maintenance and preventive maintenance tasks under the conditions proposed would not only reduce the burden of petitioning for exemption for part 135 operators, but it would greatly expedite flight turnaround times when a certificated mechanic is not available, thus benefiting passengers requiring immediate medical evacuation.

Given that the FAA has determined that safety would not be compromised. this proposed rule would not require the absence of certificated maintenance personnel for a trained pilot to perform certain tasks. The FAA realizes that this action may encourage pilots to undertake the maintenance tasks on a regular basis, thereby taking time away from pilot-related tasks that are required before flight. The FAA also realizes that by allowing pilots to perform certain tasks even when certificated maintenance personnel are present may take work from the maintenance personnel. This document solicits public comment on these two issues.

In addition, the FAA recognizes the technological advances in communication and navigation systems and the ease with which these devices may be removed, replaced, and updated. The agency has determined that safety would not be compromised if pilots were allowed to perform certain tasks. Therefore, this proposal would amend Appendix A, paragraph (c), to add to the list of work items considered to be preventive maintenance the removal and replacement of instrument panelmounted, self-contained navigation and communication devices, which the manufacture has designed for frequent removal and replacement. This authorization would not extend to automatic flight control systems, transponders, and microwave frequency distance measuring equipment (DME). Similarly, this proposal would also add to the list the updating of Air Traffic Control (ATC) navigational software data bases, provided no disassembly of the unit is required and pertinent instructions are provided by the equipment manufacturer.

This proposed rulemaking would also amend Appendix A, paragraph (c)(30)(i) to correct and editorial error. During its review of the regulations, a Flight Standards District Office found that the reference to § 147.21(f) should read § 147.21(e). In addition, the FAA has received a petition for rulemaking from Mr. John W. Caulkins requesting that a reference in § 43.7(d) that currently reads "§ 43.3(h)" be corrected to read "§ 43.3(i)." A summary of the petition was published in the **Federal Register** on June 21, 1993 (58 FR 33783), and one comment, which was favorable, was received. The FAA has determined the petition has merit, and proposes to correct the reference in this rulemaking action, taking into account, however, the proposed redesignation of current paragraph (i) to new paragraph (j).

Also, current § 43.11(b) makes reference to § 91.30(d)(2). In August 1989, 14 CFR part 91 (part 91) was recodified to make the general operating and flight rules more understandable and easier to use. All references in the Federal Aviation Regulations were to be changed at that time to correspond with the new part 91. During this recodification, § 91.30(d)(2) was renumbered § 91.213(d)(2). The text of the section was unchanged. The old reference to § 91.30(d)(2) in § 43.11 was inadvertently overlooked. This rulemaking action will correct this error.

Paperwork Reduction Act

Information collection requirements in the proposed amendment to § 43.3 have been previously approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96–511) and have been assigned OMB Control Number 2120–0021. For further information contact: the Information Requirements Division, M–34, Office of the Secretary of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590, (202) 366–4735.

Regulatory Evaluation Summary

Executive Order 12866 established the requirement that, within the extent permitted by law, a Federal regulatory action may be undertaken only if the potential benefits to society for the regulation outweigh the potential costs to society. In response to this requirement, and in accordance with Department of Transportation policies and procedures, the FAA has estimated the anticipated benefits and costs of this rulemaking action. The FAA has determined that this rule change is not a significant rulemaking action as defined by Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review). The results are summarized in this section. For more detailed economic information, see the full regulatory evaluation contained in the docket.

The proposed revisions are cost relieving because they would eliminate

the need for operators to carry mechanics on trips to remote areas or make special trips to maintenance facilities for the purpose of altering seat configurations or exchanging medical oxygen bottles. Currently, even if a mechanic is not needed at a remote site, operators may have to hire the services of a local mechanic to reconfigure a cabin, which can be especially expensive for emergency medical evacuation operations conducted at night during off-duty hours. For the purposes of this regulatory evaluation, the FAA assumes that typical air taxi operators that fly into remote areas where mechanics would be scarce could make 36 trips per year that would require cabin reconfiguration. The FAA further assumes that a pilot flying into a remote area would have to fly the airplane for an additional hour (roundtrip) to a larger airport where a mechanic would be available to perform the required maintenance.

The FAA estimates that a mechanic would have to be paid for 1/2 hour of working time at a loaded wage rate (including benefits) of \$18.16 per hour. The FAA also estimates that, in the event a cabin reconfiguration had to be performed in a remote area, the airplane would burn an additional 30 gallons of fuel during the one hour of flying time needed to reach an available mechanic, which would add \$60 to operating costs. The additional cost per trip would therefore amount to \$69. On an annual basis, these cost-savings would amount to \$2484 ($$69 \times 36$) based on the assumption of 36 trips per year. The FAA further estimates that at least 30 operators per year would have a recurring need to reconfigure cabins in remote areas based on the number of requests for exemption from the requirements of § 43.3 submitted to the FAA each year. This number is a very conservative estimate; many air taxi operators are unaware of this option and forego the additional revenue that could be earned through reconfiguring their cabins. The FAA estimates that industry-wide cost savings from the proposed rule amendment would amount to \$74,520 per year (\$2484 imes30). Over a 10-year period, the discounted value of these cost savings would amount to \$523,382.

Since January 1987, part 135 rotorcraft operators have been permitted to allow their pilots to perform certain preventive maintenance tasks, under very limited specified conditions, one of which is that the item of preventive maintenance must be the result of a malfunction that occurred en route to or in a remote area. In addition, numerous of the exemptions that permitted pilots

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