

The Advanced Qualification Program and Continuing Qualification Training

Sam Tomanio (CLT)
Training Committee

As of September 10, 1999, all B-737-3/400 pilots at US Airways transitioned into the Advanced Qualification Program (AQP). AQP is a new and innovative training program that will revolutionize the way US Airways qualifies and evaluates flight crewmembers. AQP is a flexible training, qualification, and evaluation program that permits an individual operator to design a program based on that operator's specific needs and requirements. The single most distinguishing feature of AQP is proficiency-based training, most commonly known as the "train to proficiency" concept.

The "train to proficiency" concept, and the flexibility to design the program around the needs of our pilots, will define the US Airways AQP program as we transition our flight crewmembers into their first Continuing Qualification cycle in the very near future.

As US Airways completes the transition into AQP, some new terminology will make its way into our aviation lexicon. Some of these terms are:

Continuing Qualification Training (CQT): CQT is the AQP equivalent of what we now call recurrent training.

Maneuvers Training (MT): MT in the Continuing Qualification Curriculum allows attainment and assessment of technical proficiency in the training program prior to evaluation in the Line Operational Observation.

Line Operational Evaluation (LOE): The LOE is the primary method to evaluate CRM performance under AQP. Each LOE is a simulator session conducted in a "line environment" setting, similar to a LOFT, in which certain

"event triggers" are introduced, e.g., deviations around weather, TCAS resolution and traffic advisories, hydraulic failures culminating in a no-flap landing, etc.

Gateways: A gateway is a "landmark" in the US Airways training curriculum that trainees must successfully pass through before advancing to the next curriculum segment.

Opportunity for Training Day (OTD): Within six months of his/her base month, each pilot under the US Airways AQP program may call the Training Department, schedule a simulator training session with an instructor, and receive training on any maneuver or area of concern. A crewmember may also use OTD days should he/she require extra simulator time to obtain proficiency during MT or the LOE.

Instructional Systems Development (ISD): This is the major methodology used in the AQP development process. The ISD process is a systems approach to training that has been used in most large organizations since the 1970s. The ISD process requires a task analysis of all course material in order to eliminate unnecessary course content. Task analysis is the method or procedure used to reduce a unit of work to its basic components. The ISD process applied to AQP includes the identification and integration of cognitive and technical skills into the development of the AQP training modules. One benefit of this analysis is the increased use of scenario-based training in ground school.

US Airways created a team of B-737-3/400 Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to conduct a Task Analysis using the ISD process. This team included: B-737 Program Manager Captain John Ross; Captains Mark Boots, George Elliot, and

"AQP is a flexible training, qualification, and evaluation program that permits an individual operator to design a program based on that operator's specific needs and requirements."

Jack Mitchard; Manager of AQP K.D. Vandrie; and US Airways Training Committee Chairman Tim Baker. Following the Task Analysis, the SMEs developed the US Airways Single Visit Continuing Qualification Training (CQT) program.

Flight crewmembers will be scheduled for their CQT over a three-day period, referred to as a Single Visit Training Program. The new Continuing Qualification Program will consist of one day of ground school systems and procedures review, followed by two days of simulator training: MT, and an LOE.

Let's discuss the concept of Maneuvers Training as it applies to the US Airways CQT Program. The MT sessions under our AQP will be training sessions. These simulator sessions are designed to have the same look and feel as the training sessions you are used to. All of the required maneuvers in the MT session will be "trained to proficiency." That is, maneuvers will be discussed in the briefing room, and then, if required, practiced until each maneuver falls within the standard.

When all of the required maneuvers have been successfully executed, the MT will be complete. The trainee will then "pass" through

that "gate" into the LOE. In the event that a crewmember is unable to complete all the maneuvers to standard within the allotted time period, the crewmember will receive extra simulator time until he/she can perform the maneuvers to standard. The crewmember will not receive an unsatisfactory grade. If, however, a crewmember requires extra simulator time to complete all the required maneuvers, he/she will be scheduled for an OTD day within six months in order to help maintain proficiency.

The OTD and the flexibility we have to train our crews in the Maneuvers Training sessions are just a few clear examples of how our innovative AQP program will benefit every one of our pilots.

US Airways' AQP program "train to proficiency" concept, and the emphasis on crew training and CRM integration, will provide effective training and evaluation that will enhance our professional qualifications beyond the present standards contained in traditional Part 121 training.



“The new Continuing Qualification Program will consist of one day of ground school systems and procedures review, followed by two days of simulator training.”