**Navigating Change Management in Aviation: Aligning with Part 21.137**

[[](https://www.linkedin.com/in/faaconsulting/)](https://www.linkedin.com/in/faaconsulting/)

**[Christopher Handley](https://www.linkedin.com/in/faaconsulting/)**

Author of "The Compliance Playbook: Strategies for Part 21 Certification in Aviation Parts" PmaHandley.com

December 21, 2023

Welcome back to our ongoing exploration of FAA Part 21.137. In this article, we focus on a crucial aspect often overlooked yet vital in aviation manufacturing: Change Management and Configuration Control.

**Change Management: More Than Just Adjustments**

Change management in aviation manufacturing involves much more than simply making adjustments to designs or processes. It's about ensuring that any change, no matter how small, aligns with strict regulatory standards and does not compromise the safety or integrity of the final product.

**Key Elements of Effective Change Management**

1. **Documentation of Changes**: Every change, from design modifications to material substitutions, must be meticulously documented. This ensures traceability and regulatory compliance.
2. **Thorough Review and Approval Process**: Changes must undergo a rigorous review and approval process, often involving multiple levels of scrutiny.
3. **Impact Analysis**: Understanding the impact of a change on the entire system is crucial. This includes assessing safety implications, performance, and compliance with existing standards.

**Configuration Control: Ensuring Consistency**

Configuration control is about maintaining a consistent 'configuration' of a product throughout its lifecycle. This includes not just the initial design but also any subsequent changes made.

**Strategies for Configuration Control**

1. **Centralized Record-Keeping**: Keeping a centralized record of all configurations ensures consistency and aids in audits and inspections.
2. **Clear Communication Channels**: Effective communication between departments is key to ensuring that everyone is aware of the current configuration and any changes made.
3. **Regular Training**: Regular training sessions help staff stay updated on the latest procedures and standards related to change management and configuration control.

**Conclusion**

Managing change in aviation manufacturing requires a delicate balance between innovation and adherence to established standards. By following these guidelines, manufacturers can ensure that their products remain safe, reliable, and compliant with FAA Part 21.137.

Stay tuned for our next discussion on the final aspects of Part 21.137. As always, your insights and experiences in handling change management and configuration control are welcome in the comments!