

Considering Third Country Aviation EASA Regulatory Training Miss-Understanding

White Paper: Clarifying the Role, Value, and Expectations of EASA-Compliant Train the Trainer (TTT) Qualifications

Introduction

There is a widespread misconception within the aviation industry regarding the purpose and outcome of EASA-compliant Train the Trainer (TTT) programs. A common myth persists—that a short, intensive course of two to five days can singularly qualify a person to act as a competent trainer. This white paper aims to correct such misunderstandings, present a clear view of the regulatory landscape, and define the critical role organizations must play in developing instructional competence.

Sofema Aviation Services (SAS) and Sofema Online (SOL), together supporting over 165,000 aviation professionals worldwide, are at the forefront of delivering regulatory training. This paper outlines our perspective and commitment to supporting the development of internal trainers within EASA Part 145 and Part 147 environments.

Regulatory Foundation: Competence Lies with the Organization

European regulations, including **EU 1321/2014**, do not mandate specific "Train the Trainer" approvals from EASA or any external body. Instead, the regulations emphasize a competence-based approach. That is:

It is the responsibility of the approved organization to evaluate, approve, and monitor the competence of their instructors.

This responsibility applies across various domains such as:

- Safety Management Systems (SMS)
- Human Factors (HF)
- Maintenance Error Decision Aid (MEDA)
- EWIS & FTS
- Internal Auditing
- Regulatory and Technical Subjects

EASA does not issue certifications for trainers delivering non-Part 66 content. Therefore, any request for "EASA-certified trainers" or EASA approval of TTT courses for such subjects reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the regulatory framework.

Clarifying the Role of TTT: A Platform for Competence Development

Sofema's TTT programs do not *certify* someone as a trainer. Rather, they serve as competence-building platforms aimed at individuals who already possess subject matter expertise. The focus is on:

- Adult learning methodology
- Soft skills development

- Presentation and instructional techniques
- Understanding of group dynamics and learner engagement

The **TTT course is a step in a larger developmental journey**—not a substitute for technical knowledge or practical experience.

Dispelling Common Misconceptions

Myth 1: TTT Certificates Equal Qualification

A TTT certificate is not a license to teach. Competence must be demonstrated in practice and maintained over time. Training authorities—especially in Third Countries—should not regard the certificate as stand-alone validation.

Myth 2: EASA Approves All Training Providers

EASA does not approve training providers for non-Part 66 courses. This includes SMS, HF, EWIS, FTS, or Internal Auditor training. Requests for EASA approval of such courses reflect a lack of regulatory understanding and disqualify candidates who make them from assuming instructional roles.

Myth 3: Part 147 Applies to All Aviation Training

EASA Part 147 is limited to Basic and Type Training under Part 66. It does not apply to the broader regulatory training domain. Using Part 147 status as a benchmark for other training is a misapplication of the regulation.

Trainer vs Facilitator: Understanding the Distinction

In aviation training, clarity of role is essential:

- **Trainer:** Delivers structured content based on deep subject knowledge and typically includes examination or testing of knowledge.
- **Facilitator:** Manages learner-led discussions and dynamics; does not necessarily require subject expertise.

In the EASA regulatory context, especially for subjects like HF or SMS, the role of the trainer dominates, and competence in the topic area is non-negotiable.

Qualities of an Effective Aviation Trainer - A successful trainer in the aviation environment is characterized by:

1. **Subject matter mastery**
2. **Passion for sharing knowledge**
3. **Strong communication skills**
4. **Understanding of adult learning principles**
5. **Analytical thinking and curiosity**
6. **Familiarity with EASA regulatory structures**
7. **Readiness to evolve through feedback and reflection**

Internal Trainers: Strategic Advantage

Investing in internal trainers offers long-term benefits:

- **Cost-effective** compared to external sourcing
- **Availability** for immediate or ad hoc sessions
- **Embedded** in organizational culture and procedures
- Supports **AMC 145.A.30(e)** compliance (staff competence management)
- Enhances training continuity and customization

However, this strategy only succeeds when **organizations actively manage and oversee instructional quality**.

Challenges and Oversight Imperatives

While the benefits are clear, the risks include:

- Assigning unqualified individuals to deliver training
- Failure to maintain competence through recurrent oversight
- Lack of managerial capability to supervise trainer development

Therefore, every organization must establish a structured instructor development framework supported by internal assessments, mentoring, and continuous improvement mechanisms.

Case Reflections: Misuse of TTT and Over-Reliance on Certificates

We have encountered numerous cases where candidates are sent to multiple TTT courses in the hope of becoming qualified. Without foundational competence, this is a **waste of resources**. For example:

- **Human Factors** trainers with no maintenance experience lack the contextual understanding needed to deliver value.
- **SMS** trainers who don't understand ICAO Annex 19 or GACAR Part 5 are ill-equipped to deliver meaningful training.

TTT is not a substitute for **experience, understanding, and organizational validation**.

The Trainer Journey: A Two-Year Evolution

Even with strong TTT input, a trainer typically requires **two years of development** to mature into a confident, adaptable, and effective instructor. This journey includes:

- Delivering supervised sessions
- Receiving structured feedback
- Participating in continuous learning
- Refining presentation and engagement techniques

Sofema provides the scaffolding for this evolution—but the commitment must come from the employer.

Building the Right Framework: Recommendations

To build a successful internal instructor pool:

- **Select candidates** based on subject knowledge and attitude
- **Use TTT courses** as an entry point—not an endpoint

- **Assign mentors** to guide development
- **Conduct periodic evaluations** to assess delivery effectiveness
- **Ensure managerial oversight** is competent and active

Conclusion

Instructional competence is earned—not granted. Train the Trainer courses are a vital piece of the puzzle, but not the full picture. Becoming a qualified aviation trainer requires deep technical knowledge, practice, engagement, and organizational support. Sofema is here to walk with you through this journey—providing structure, expertise, and scalable solutions to meet your organizational goals. Let's build the next generation of effective aviation trainers—together.

Accessing Sofema's Training Ecosystem

Sofema supports trainer development through:

- **Classroom & Webinar Courses** – www.sassofia.com
- **Self-paced Online Courses** – www.sofemaonline.com
- **Guest Access for Evaluation** – Email team@sassofia.com
- **Courses Include:** Instructor-led videos, competency-based CLOs, and built-in exams

Contact us today to discuss your internal training development needs:



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