

# The Flight Dispatcher's License

What is a flight dispatcher license?

- Is it proof of training?
- Is it proof of some level of demonstrated skill?

The answer is yes...to both of the above... but that only indicates what one has to do to get a flight dispatcher's license. It does not cover what the license permits once it is in your hands.

An airman's license, including a flight dispatcher's license, is issued by competent government authority in the public interest. The airman's license grants privileges to the holder that are denied to those without the license, in the public interest.

The public interest weighs in whenever a privilege is granted that includes some level of risk to the public. Along with those privileges are responsibilities to the public in terms of compliance with laws and regulations and, most importantly, not compromising the safety of the public.

If the license-holder operates, which includes authorizing and planning flights as well as the actual manipulation of the controls of an aircraft, flights contrary to those laws and regulations, or operates a flight in a careless or reckless manner, the issuing authority has the power to suspend or revoke that airman's license and all of the privileges that go with it.

In most ICAO States, the mere possession of a flight dispatcher's license does not allow an airman to immediately start exercising the privileges of the license. ICAO Standards and State civil aviation regulations generally require additional airline-specific training, often up to a year in duration, combined with on-the-job desk training and passing a very comprehensive competency check, as well as a route familiarization flight before the license-holder can actually exercise those privileges. This is also the case in the U.S.

In the U.S., FAA-issued airman licenses are actually called certificates. There is no meaningful difference between an airman license and an airman certificate. Receiving your certificate is only the beginning of the training process and does not qualify you to dispatch.

The terms Flight Dispatcher and Flight Operations Officer are used interchangeably by ICAO. Within IFALDA there is no meaningful difference between the two terms. Generally speaking, the term Flight Operations Officer is used more often in Europe, while the term Flight Dispatcher or Aircraft Dispatcher is generally used in the Western Hemisphere. Other areas of the world use either term.