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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Issued by the Department of Transportation on February 15, 2002

NOTICE OF ACTION TAKEN -- DOCKET OST-2002-11613 - 2

This serves as notice to the public of the action described below, taken by the Department official indicated (no additional confirming order will be issued in this matter).

Applicant: **Polynesian Limited** Date Filed: February 15, 2002

Relief requested: Exemption pursuant to 49 U.S.C. section 40109(g) to operate one one-way passenger charter flight from Pago Pago, American Samoa, to Manu'a, American Samoa, on/about February 15, 2002, using its Norman Islander or Twin Otter aircraft, to transport mechanics and aircraft parts on behalf of Samoa Air to repair one of Samoa's two Twin Otter aircraft, which is grounded in Manu'a with a mechanical breakdown. In support of its request, Polynesian stated that there are no mechanics or spare parts available in Manu'a to repair the aircraft; Samoa Air's second aircraft is also out of service for repairs, leaving American Samoa without any local U.S. carrier service in the region; there are no U.S. air taxi operators or general aviation aircraft in the region that could be used for this operation; the 2,400 foot runway in Manu'a makes it impossible for larger aircraft to land or takeoff; and transportation by boat is not possible due to current and predicted weather conditions. It stated that the flight must conducted as soon as possible before deteriorating weather conditions make it impossible to operate, and to prevent the stranding of passengers in American Samoa over the upcoming holiday weekend.

Applicant representative: Charles Donley 202-626-6840

Responsive pleadings: Polynesian served its application on those U.S. carriers conducting operations in the geographic area. Each carrier indicated that it did not have aircraft available to conduct the proposed operation and that it had no comment or did not oppose grant of the requested authority to Polynesian.

Statutory Standards: Under 49 U.S.C. section 40109(g), we may authorize a foreign air carrier to carry commercial traffic between U.S. points (*i.e.*, cabotage traffic) under limited circumstances. Specifically, we must find that the authority is required in the public interest; that because of an emergency created by unusual circumstances not arising in the normal course of business the traffic cannot be accommodated by U.S. carriers holding certificates under 49 U.S.C. section 41102; that all possible efforts have been made to place the traffic on U.S. carriers; and that the transportation is necessary to avoid unreasonable hardship to the traffic involved (an additional required finding, concerning emergency transportation during labor disputes, was not relevant here). For examples of earlier grants of authority of this type, *see, e.g.*, Order 2001-5-23.

DISPOSITION

Action: Approved Action date: February 15, 2002

Effective dates of authority granted: February 15-19, 2002

Basis for approval: We found that the application met all the relevant criteria of 49 U.S.C. section 40109(g) for the grant of an exemption of this type and that the grant was required in the public interest. Specifically, we were persuaded that Samoa Air's unanticipated need to transport mechanics and aircraft parts promptly in order to prevent further delays in resuming flight operations, and the fact that the transportation could not be accomplished by boat or larger aircraft, constituted an emergency not arising in the normal course of business. Moreover, we concluded that no U.S. carrier had aircraft available which could be used to conduct the operation at issue here. We also found that grant of Polynesian's request would prevent undue hardship to Samoa Air's passengers. Finally, we found that the applicant was qualified to perform its proposed operations (*see, e.g.*, Notice of Action Taken dated June 21, 2001, in Docket OST-2001-9313).

Except to the extent exempted/waived, this authority is subject to our standard exemption conditions (attached).

Action taken by: **Read C. Van de Water**
Assistant Secretary for Aviation
and International Affairs

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http://dms.dot.gov//reports/reports_aviation.asp

FOREIGN AIR CARRIER CONDITIONS OF AUTHORITY

In the conduct of the operations authorized, the holder shall:

(1) Not conduct any operations unless it holds a currently effective authorization from its homeland for such operations, and it has filed a copy of such authorization with the Department;

(2) Comply with all applicable requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration, including, but not limited to, 14 CFR Parts 129, 91, and 36;

(3) Comply with the requirements for minimum insurance coverage contained in 14 CFR Part 205, and, prior to the commencement of any operations under this authority, file evidence of such coverage, in the form of a completed OST Form 6411, with the Federal Aviation Administration's Program Management Branch (AFS-260), Flight Standards Service (any changes to, or termination of, insurance also shall be filed with that office);

(4) Not operate aircraft under this authority unless it complies with operational safety requirements at least equivalent to Annex 6 of the Chicago Convention;

(5) Conform to the airworthiness and airman competency requirements of its Government for international air services;

(6) Except as specifically exempted or otherwise provided for in a Department Order, comply with the requirements of 14 CFR Part 203, concerning waiver of Warsaw Convention liability limits and defenses;

(7) Agree that operations under this authority constitute a waiver of sovereign immunity, for the purposes of 28 U.S.C. 1605(a), but only with respect to those actions or proceedings instituted against it in any court or other tribunal in the United States that are:

(a) based on its operations in international air transportation that, according to the contract of carriage, include a point in the United States as a point of origin, point of destination, or agreed stopping place, or for which the contract of carriage was purchased in the United States; or

(b) based on a claim under any international agreement or treaty cognizable in any court or other tribunal of the United States.

In this condition, the term "international air transportation" means "international transportation" as defined by the Warsaw Convention, except that all States shall be considered to be High Contracting Parties for the purpose of this definition;

(8) Except as specifically authorized by the Department, originate or terminate all flights to/from the United States in its homeland;

(9) Comply with the requirements of 14 CFR Part 217, concerning the reporting of scheduled, nonscheduled, and charter data;

(10) If charter operations are authorized, comply (except as otherwise provided in the applicable bilateral agreement) with the Department's rules governing charters (including 14 CFR Parts 212 and 380); and

(11) Comply with such other reasonable terms, conditions, and limitations required by the public interest as may be prescribed by the Department, with all applicable orders or regulations of other U.S. agencies and courts, and with all applicable laws of the United States.

This authority shall not be effective during any period when the holder is not in compliance with the conditions imposed above. Moreover, this authority cannot be sold or otherwise transferred without explicit Department approval under Title 49 of the U.S. Code (formerly the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, as amended).