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The

ARGUS audit “Echo System” – how all audit products work and interact together

The ARGUS rating system is widely recognized as the premier gauge of operational quality in business aviation around the world. From TripCHEQ to Platinum Elite, it provides charter customers with assurances that the operators they do business with are holding themselves to the highest standards (well above regulatory requirements).

Shouldn't the various regulatory requirements, like FAA Part 135, or Commercial Certificates by CAAs around the world be enough? That's a fair question, and the answer is that holding an FAA Part 135 certificate (or international equivalent) is only the beginning. It's recognition that an operator meets certain minimum commercial standards of safety as determined by their nation's civil aviation authority (CAA). This is only one baseline requirement for a private aircraft charter provider to be listed in the ARGUS CHEQ registry: They must have held their certificate for a minimum of one year and operate at least one turbine-powered aircraft. CHEQ analysts also verify that all flights are crewed with two highly experienced and properly qualified pilots, even if the aircraft is approved for single-pilot operations. The ARGUS team also searches databases, such as the NTSB and FAA databases, for any history of accidents, incidents, or regulatory violations. Only by passing these hurdles will a private aircraft charter operator be awarded ARGUS Gold status and warrant a green TripCHEQ.

A Gold rating is just the first step. If an operator desires to attain the next rating, ARGUS Platinum, they must undergo a thorough assessment using the ARGUS Audit Standard. This is a multi-week process starting with a full preparatory review of the operations, followed by a two-day, onsite event which examines the certificate holder's safety management system, emergency response planning, operational control, administrative controls, training, and maintenance programs, then follows with a complete report and support in helping operators' clear findings on their path to obtaining their Platinum Rating.

The ARGUS standard is based on years of accumulated industry best practices and is constantly evolving to incorporate changes in the regulatory and operating environment. ARGUS flight operations and maintenance auditors have decades of experience and apply their knowledge to helping each Platinum operator maintain the highest standards of safety and quality. Any findings raised during an audit must be corrected to earn the Platinum rating, and all corrective actions go through a demanding acceptance process with a separate, experienced auditor before the audit is closed. Finally, to maintain the Platinum

rating, operators must undergo a renewal audit every two years. An ARGUS Platinum rating provides assurance that the operator has met exacting requirements which go well beyond the basic regulatory minimums.

It doesn't end there. The Platinum Elite program recognizes that operators with a consistent history of successful Platinum audits are ready to move up to the next level. The Elite program replaces the biannual audit cycle with continuous monitoring, which consists of periodic reviews performed every six months against selected items from the ARGUS audit standard. This culminates in an onsite biannual review audit, at which point the six-month review cycle begins anew.

When a passenger arrives at the FBO to meet their flight, what assurances do they have that the facility is adhering to the highest standards of safety and service quality? As it does for charter providers, the ARGUS Base Operations audit evaluates FBOs against an exacting checklist of industry best practices for aircraft handling, safety programs, security, and customer service, all which illustrate how an FBO ensures the highest level of quality for their customers. Furthermore, passengers meeting aircraft from a Platinum-rated operator at an ARGUS certified FBO can be rest assured they are protected by an unbroken chain of the industry's highest standards.

Of course, aircraft operators and FBOs are not the only links the chain. Charter brokers in the ARGUS Certified Broker program are subjected to biannual audits of their business practices to ensure compliance with legal requirements and due-diligence processes when arranging charters on the customer's behalf. ARGUS Certified Brokers have met strict standards to provide assurance that they are protecting their customer's investment in aircraft charter.

From booking the trip, to aircraft preparation, to takeoff, cruise, and landing, charter customers can have the peace of mind that by traveling in the ARGUS-certified Eco-System, they are Booking, Departing, Flying, and Arriving with the best operators in the industry.

