

CFIG

Soaring Society of America Instructor Newsletter May 2002

Welcome to CFIG, the newsletter for SSA Instructors! This newsletter represents the first submission of a regularly scheduled publication developed to provide flight instructors with the most up to date information available relating to flight training and safety issues. Ultimately, our goal is to produce a newsletter that compliments our current *Sailplane Safety* publication. However, *CFIG* is a newsletter dedicated to glider instructors, our first line of defense in the prevention of soaring accidents.

To make this newsletter successful, we need your help. We would appreciate your input on how to make this information more valuable to you, the flight instructor. One of the most frequent requests we have received at SSA Instructor Forums and Luncheons at past conventions is the development of a means to exchange training techniques with other flight instructors. In future issues of *CFIG*, I would like to include a regular column called *From the Back Seat*. This column will consist of guest editorials from you, the flight instructor. Get those word processors fired up and share your knowledge of teaching soaring with your fellow flight instructors. Articles can be submitted to the Soaring Safety Foundation at soaringsafety@mindspring.com

Another regular feature of future editions of *CFIG* will be a column relating to the practical test for pilot certification and additional aircraft ratings. The purpose of the column will be to give instructors and applicants additional insight into the certification process and, in doing so, make the system less mysterious.

Hot Topics

- ✓ A review of yearly accident data indicates that the six-week period from mid-April until the end of May is the time frame in which approximately 50% of all soaring accidents occur. While a number of factors may influence this trend, one of the most significant relates to pilot proficiency. In many parts of the country, these months represent the first opportunity for pilots to conduct their first soaring flights of the year. In fact, a number of individuals and clubs do not even insure their gliders during the six-month period from October until March. Obviously, a pilot who hasn't flown for a six-month period will not be at the level of proficiency necessary to conduct a safe flight even though that pilot may be in compliance with the recent flight experience required by FAR 61.57.

Remember that current is defined as *being up to date or occurring within a recent period of time*. Proficiency, on the other hand, means *the ability to perform a skill with expert correctness*. Consequently, a pilot may be legal in terms of compliance with the regulations but may not be safe in terms of proficiency. The challenge for us, as flight instructors, is to encourage the membership of our clubs and soaring organizations to participate in regular recurrent training. In promoting the concept of recurrent training to a club or soaring organization, I typically use an illustration that involves the game of golf. Ask any golfer why he or she plays with such regularity and the typical response is because the game is fun and to improve personal skills (improve handicap or overall score). The same can be said about soaring – it is fun and we need to improve our skills to become better pilots. Besides, how good is your golf game after a six-month absence?

A number of programs that promote recurrent training are currently available to pilots. The FAA Pilot Proficiency Program, or *Wings Program*, is an excellent way for pilots to complete the requirements for the flight review and receive recognition from the FAA at the same time. In addition, some insurance carriers provide reduced premiums for pilots who participate in the *Wings Program*. Advisory Circular 61-91H, Pilot Proficiency Award Program, outlines the recurrent training requirements of the Wings program. This Advisory Circular and many others are available at www.faa.gov.

Other opportunities for recurrent pilot training include the ABC & Bronze Badge Training Program; the flight review mandated by FAR 61.56 and 90-day proficiency checks for student pilots. The goal of recurrent training is to create the opportunity for pilots to review basic proficiency maneuvers on a regular basis. Take a moment to talk with your club safety officer and schedule a safety weekend. Integrating a safety seminar into a Pilot Proficiency Program or Badge Weekend is a great way to start the soaring season. Remember, the Soaring Safety Foundation has a number of videos and presentations available to assist the flight instructor in promoting soaring safety.

- ✓ We have recently received a number of questions relating to FAR 91.307, *Parachutes and parachuting*. Primarily, these questions concern the requirement for pilots to wear parachutes during spin training. To review, FAR 91.307(c) states:

(c) Unless each occupant of the aircraft is wearing an approved parachute, no pilot of a civil aircraft, carrying any person (other than a crewmember) may execute any intentional maneuver that exceeds –

- (1) A bank of 60 degrees relative to the horizon; or
- (2) A nose-up or nose-down attitude of 30 degrees relative to the horizon.

So far, so good. The confusion begins to surface in the next paragraph.

(d) Paragraph (c) of this section does not apply to –

- (1) Flight tests for pilot certification or rating, or
- (2) *Spins and other flight maneuvers required by the regulations for any certificate or rating when given by –*
 - (i) A certificated flight instructor; or
 - (ii) An airline transport pilot instructing in accordance with 61.167 of this chapter.

The legal interpretation of this regulation states, “If none of the occupants, including the pilot and any other crewmember, are wearing approved parachutes, banking of the aircraft relative to the horizon cannot exceed 60 degrees and nose-up and nose-down attitude relative to the horizon must be 30 degrees or less. FAR 1.1 defines “crewmember” as “a person assigned to perform duty in an aircraft during flight time.”

FAA Chief Counsel Opinion

A certificated flight instructor (CFI) and his or her student are excepted from the parachute requirement for only those maneuvers which are required by the regulations for any certificate or rating (*even one not presently sought by the student*). Any maneuver that is not required by the regulations for any certificate or rating must be taught employing parachutes pursuant to FAR 91.307.

Currently, the only rating that requires spin training is airplane or glider flight instructor. However, in accordance with the FAA Chief Counsel Ruling, a flight instructor may provide spin training to a pilot in accordance with the spin training requirement of the flight instructor rating, *even if the pilot is not presently seeking the rating.*

- ✓ The Soaring Safety Foundation is pleased to announce the availability *The Standard American Soaring Signals*, the third in a series of accident prevention videos. This video provides a graphic depiction of both ground and in-flight signals as seen from the cockpit of the glider. The video is a great tool to use in reviewing the signals and is an excellent resource for use at safety meetings and seminars. This product is especially useful as a recurrent training aid at the start of each soaring season.

The video is available at no cost and can be ordered on-line through the Soaring Safety Foundation web site at www.soaringsafety.org/ip.asp

- ✓ The Soaring Safety Foundation is also pleased to announce the availability of pilot logbooks for the private pilot applicant. These logbooks were designed with the flight instructor in mind as it contains all federal regulations relating to private pilot certification. Additionally, all endorsements required by the regulations for student pilot solo privileges and practical test prerequisites are included.
- ✓ To encourage continuing proficiency throughout the training program, the logbook also contains the requirements of the ABC & Bronze Badge Training Program. Each requirement is presented with a block for the instructor to check as the item is completed. The logbook was designed specifically for the private pilot applicant although pilots that have already completed the certification for a private pilot certificate may use it as well. These logbooks may be obtained at no costs by request to the Soaring Safety Foundation. We'll e-mail members of our SSAI E-mail Group soon with the address of the logbook order form.
- ✓ FAR 61.69, Glider Towing: Experience and Training Requirements states that no person may act as pilot in command of an aircraft towing a glider unless specific requirements of the regulation are satisfied. The Soaring Safety Foundation has received a number of questions relating to the pilot logbook endorsements required by this regulation. First FAR 61.69 (a) (3) requires "a logbook endorsement from an authorized instructor who certifies that the person [the new tow pilot] has received ground and flight training in gliders and is proficient in –

- (i) The techniques and procedures essential to the safe towing of gliders, including airspeed limitations;
- (ii) Emergency procedures;
- (iii) Signals used; and
- (iv) Maximum angles of bank."

Paragraph (a) (5) requires "a logbook endorsement from the pilot, described in paragraph (a) (4) of this section, certifying that the person [the new tow pilot] has accomplished at least 3 flights in an aircraft while towing a glider, or while using simulated glider towing procedures." The remaining portion of the regulation covers recurrent towing requirements and also addresses glider towing by pilots having a private pilot certificate.

This regulation was revised with the revision of Part 61 in 1997. It is important to note that *only those pilots who have made and logged 10 or more flights as pilot in command of an aircraft towing a glider in accordance with a certificate of waiver prior to May 17, 1967* are exempt from the requirement to have these endorsements.

- ✓ This newsletter is being forwarded to all SSA Instructors that are included in the SSA Instructor e-mail grouping. This document is also being posted on our website and is available for downloading. Pilots not currently included in our e-mail grouping who would like to receive periodic training and safety updates, can subscribe to the e-mail list through our web site at www.soaringsafety.org. Although this service is primarily designed for glider instructors, all pilots are welcomed to subscribe and receive safety and training updates.

If you have ideas or methods relating to the training of glider pilots that you would like to share with other instructors, please forward those to us today. It is our hope to provide this newsletter quarterly, or on an immediate basis as needed.

Remember, you are the first line of defense in preventing soaring accidents. Help us to make 2002 the safest ever!

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