

On Saturday, January 27, the instructor and check pilots gathered for a meeting to discuss the standardization and evaluation program for Group 1. These meetings are to be held quarterly to discuss training needs to enhance the quality of flight operations.

Hopefully by the time this is published the Congress will have passed a budget and life within CAP will return to normal as far as budgeting for training and check rides go. The latest word from the FLWG is that check ride funding is currently not available under the continuing resolution. In the meantime, we are facing a dilemma on check ride funding. A CAP pilot currently has to decide to either self fund or go non-current. CAP rules state that non-current pilots will not be funded. Hence the dilemma.

One area that our check pilots have seen as a weak spot on check rides are short/soft field takeoffs and landings. This is not surprising since we do not operate out of any short airfields and we are not permitted to land on soft fields. Consequently, our pilots probably do one short field and one soft field per year at check ride time. Hardly enough to make one proficient on a check ride required maneuver. Consider while PIC on a fire patrol or such mission, practicing a short or soft field take off and landing occasionally. Another way to maintain our proficiency is for AFAM qualified pilots to utilize the new flight proficiency profiles that have come out. The new profiles are better designed to cover the areas in which we must maintain proficiency. Remember that currency is a legal term, proficiency involves safety. Once funding returns, avail yourselves of the proficiency profiles, but be sure to complete all the required items on the profile and to document those items on the worksheet which is downloaded to WMIRS. In the meantime, continue to develop your aeronautical education by attending FAA seminars or registering for the WINGS program at FAAsafety.gov and taking their online courses on topics that are tailor-made to your flying when you set up your personal profile.

Another area that check pilots see that could be improved is knowledge of CAP policies, procedures and regulations. The check pilots see this issue at times during initial check rides of new pilots to CAP. The new pilots generally fly the maneuvers found on the CAPF5 within standards found in the ACS. But, sometimes they stumble through WMIRS, the AIF, CAPR 70-1, and other associated policies and procedures. They may be knowledgeable of the FARs, but might not be aware that CAP regulations might be more stringent.

To help the new pilots through the CAP maze, we are encouraging our instructor pilots to go beyond preparing them for the flight maneuvers and to provide additional training and guidance in the CAP related areas that are sometimes not clear in the new pilot's mind. Also, Mission Pilots flying with new pilots should take the time to mentor the new pilots on regulations and "paperwork" when they fly with them. Work with them as you make your entries in the AIF and in WMIRS. Consider having them make the entries under your supervision to give them experience in making WMIRS and AIF entries. Most of us learn best by doing. I know it takes a bit longer, but it will be time well spent.

Also, new pilots can do their part to obtain an adequate working knowledge of CAP required information. New pilots can study the CAPR 70-1 as well as the Florida Supplement to 70-1 then ask questions of CAP pilots they fly with on sorties. Although we were all motivated to join CAP to fly airplanes, new pilots should first take the time to learn CAP by working on their scanner rating and performing some assigned job within the squadron while they digest this CAP material prior to

requesting a CAPF 5 check ride.

Keep in mind, the check pilots want to see all CAP pilots pass their evaluation rides. But no check pilot wants to sign off a pilot who is deficient in the ways of CAP no matter how good a pilot he/she is knowing he/she could go out the next day and inadvertently violate a CAP regulation or policy. Simple things like having the fueler top off a CAP airplane when it is mandated to be refueled to a specified level below full. Or the new pilot might use the wrong credit card or use it for payment on things not authorized. This would get the new pilot in trouble with CAP and put the check pilot in a bad light for not properly evaluating the pilot before cutting him/her loose to fly CAP airplanes. The new pilot has to adapt to the idea that the CAP airplane is property of CAP National and the USAF and must be flown under their rules and regulations. All of us were new CAP pilots at one time and had to learn this knowledge as well. Learn from a mentor, and when in doubt, ask.

For both new and senior pilots, please obtain a copy from an instructor/or check pilot of my CAPF 5 guide prior to your check ride to use as a check list to insure you have what you need on the day of the check ride. Nothing is more frustrating than showing up for a check ride and having failed to comply with one of the requirements to take the ride. This is frustrating for both you and for the check pilot. This check list does not guarantee everything will go smoothly, but it is comprehensive enough to cover the big items. You may also contact me and I will email you a copy.

For pilots desiring to receive a G1000 endorsement in the C182, the good news is that CAPR 70-1 no longer requires following the FITS syllabus to qualify for the check ride. The bad news, it is incumbent upon the pilot to have the necessary training and skills to pass the check ride in the glass. If you need training, get with a CAP G1000 qualified instructor pilot to work with you with the G1000 airplane electrical system hooked up to a GPU. You can also read Max Trescott's G1000 Glass Cockpit Guide. Of course, you will also need to have a high performance endorsement in your log book.

One final area for today falls into the category that might be called rumors or wish lists.

There has been talk within CAP to use a check ride policy of allowing the pilot to take the annual check ride not only in the month it is due, but also in the month prior or the month following. The anniversary date would remain the same. If this policy goes into effect, it will take pressure off both CAP pilots and CAP check pilots who have to deal with weather, maintenance, operations and the availability of check pilots. For now, we must continue to have it done in the calendar month it is due.

There are two areas regarding check rides that I just recently learned. Although the three month window is not in effect, a pilot may take the check ride the month before the due date and still be funded. Keep in mind that the anniversary date now changes to 12 calendar months from the date the check ride was taken. So this gives some additional flexibility regarding check rides.

Although we are all aware that funding is available to all current AFAM qualified pilots, we should keep in mind that a qualified and current AFAM pilot also includes, not only SAR/MP, but also TMP and cadet o-ride pilots. Mission pilot trainees are also eligible for CAPF91 check ride funding provided they are a current and qualified TMP or cadet o-ride pilot.

There has also been talk of funding for training using a Red Bird simulator. This would be an

outstanding addition to our training program. As any of you know who have trained in simulators, there are so many things that can be simulated safely that we would not want to do in the actual airplane. Again, just something in the talk phase. But that is where ideas become reality.

In the meantime, use your superior aeronautical decision making skills to avoid situations where you have to use your superior airmanship skills. Although not all of our pilots were at one time professional pilots, our philosophy in Group 1 is for all of our pilots to adhere to professional standards.