



# COPA CODE OF CONDUCT

By Rick Beach

## COPA Code of Conduct: Use it to fly safe!

Included with this issue of *Cirrus Pilot* magazine is a printed copy of the COPA Code of Conduct. You may have read the previous columns that discussed each of the seven sections: Aviator Responsibilities; Passengers and People on the Surface; Training and Proficiency; Security; Environmental Issues; Technology; and Promotion of General Aviation.

Now is the time to take your printed copy, re-read it, put it in your flight bag, and review it occasionally while flight planning or cruising on a long leg. Why? Because it captures tidbits of information for safe flying and promoting general aviation.

COPA members have a substantially lower rate of fatal accidents than Cirrus pilots in general. Only three of 26 fatal accidents involved COPA members, and one of those was a medical incapacitation in which his passenger successfully deployed CAPS.

If you are reading this magazine, then something about your participation in COPA correlates well with safer flying.

As many people believe, your pilot's license is a license to learn. New challenges in flying arise every time you prepare for a trip. Things constantly change, perhaps weather, destination, route or your own proficiency. Recurrent flight instruction and the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) focus on the tasks and skills of flying.

The COPA Code of Conduct provides a tool for learning about the broader aspects of general aviation suitable for every pilot: safety, excellence in airmanship, good judgment, managing risks, responsibility and courtesy. By addressing broader issues, it seeks to establish high standards that will

promote and advance the public appreciation of general aviation. When more pilots fly to these higher standards, there will be stronger arguments to overcome the pressures to restrict or limit our flying.

Surely, you know about some of those pressures. Developers who want to encroach on airports, building in safety areas or protruding into the airspace. Airport neighbors who complain about the noise of aircraft operations or the annoyance of frequent over flights, forcing flight restrictions. Alarmists who feel insecure imagining dangerous calamities from general aviation airplanes, bringing onerous safety procedures. Airlines and their lobbyists who want to tip the balance of payments away from themselves and towards the general aviation fleet. Even environmental advocates who observe ill-advised flights over environmentally sensitive areas and poor maintenance practices that contribute to pollution.

We all need to act to protect our privilege to fly.

Reviewing the COPA Code of Conduct will refresh your memory of the issues that you can affect. Set a good example, so others have less to complain about. Be proud of our organization and our commitment to safe flying. Tactfully challenge other pilots when their behavior contributes evidence to our critics. (Tactfully, because we rarely know enough to judge!) Share the principles with instructors and other pilots to spread the word.

Hopefully your copy of the COPA Code of Conduct will wear out from good use. You can always order another one! Uphold the COPA standards of excellence. **COPA**



You can download extra copies of the COPA Code of Conduct from the COPA website – go to the main page, [www.cirruspilots.org](http://www.cirruspilots.org), and click on COPA Code of Conduct. To receive another printed copy, please send a 9 X 6-inch self-addressed envelope to:

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