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Doing Aviation Properly – The COPA Code of Conduct

A few years ago, I met Michael Baum, developer of the Aviators' Model Code of Conduct (AMCC); a labor of love that I believe will significantly benefit the safety of general aviation (see www.secureav.com). I was honored when he invited me to join the Permanent Editorial Board, where I work with some of the finest aviation minds I know. The AMCC will never be "finished" – it's a living document. But we hope it is always appropriate for pilots at every level. COPA member Rick Beach has been working to develop the COPA Code of Conduct, or CCC, based on the AMCC. His introduction to this work is on page 52. I encourage you to read it, absorb it, and hopefully embrace it as a way to make all of general aviation as safe and enjoyable as it can be.

COPA CODE OF CONDUCT (CCC)

By Rick Beach

We buy a safe airplane and train for safe flying. We study aeronautical decision-making. We attend pilot education programs like the Cirrus Pilot Proficiency Program (CPPP) and Critical Decision Making (CDM) seminars, and we train with Cirrus Standardized Instructors (CSIs). Yet we continue to see winter weather related accidents.

What more can we do? Can we reach out to keep our fellow Cirrus pilots alive? Can we avoid accidents to prevent our insurance rates from skyrocketing?

A recent thread on the COPA forum discussed what we could do to self-police pilot errors (search for "pilot error in COPA" posted on Jan. 15, 2006). Suggestions ranged from the punitive (come down hard on judgment lapses), to outreach (hang COPA tags on planes not in the member database), to insurance discounts (already implied for CPPP and CSIP training), to "company rules" (take an oath to follow a COPA flight manual).

In this issue, *Cirrus Pilot* introduces the COPA Code of Conduct for COPA members. Just as the practices in the AIM relate to the regulations in the FAR, the COPA Code of Conduct relates to the ethics, courtesy and common-sense safety among practitioners of general aviation. These voluntary practices enhance safety of flight, advance your airmanship and sustain general aviation. They represent a vision for excellence in flying.


COPA adapted an earlier version based upon Michael Baum's *Aviators' Model Code of Conduct*. It has been placed in the documents section of www.cirruspilots.org and distributed through several CDM seminars around the country. Now, we plan to further personalize it to COPA and publish each of

the seven sections of the COPA Code of Conduct in an issue of *Cirrus Pilot*. The sections are:

- I. General Responsibilities of Aviators
- II. Passengers and People on the Surface
- III. Training and Proficiency
- IV. Security
- V. Environmental Issues
- VI. Use of Technology
- VII. Advancement and Promotion of General Aviation

COPA believes that the COPA Code of Conduct will benefit members by:

- Helping pilots become better (and safer) aviators through recommended practices;
- Addressing issues of improved pilot training, personal responsibility and contributions to the community;
- Encouraging ethical behavior among pilots;
- Advancing self-regulation by the general aviation community;
- Promoting general aviation;
- Making flying a more rewarding experience.

Should you want to read ahead, look for the original Aviators' Model Code of Conduct v1.1 at the www.secureav.com Web site. For in-depth research and discussion, follow the links to detailed commentary and examples. 

About Rick Beach: A long-standing COPA member, Rick regularly posts online as our de-facto Cirrus "accident historian", and constantly champions better decision making. He has 1,550 hours on his 2001 SR22 and is based at KMYF.