About the Commentary: The Commentary addresses selected issues within the AVIATORS' MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT (AMCC) to elaborate on their meaning, provide interpretive guidance, and suggest ways of adopting the AMCC. It is intended primarily for implementers, policy administrators, aviation association management, and pilots who wish to explore the AMCC in greater depth. Please send your edits, errata, and comments to <PEB@secureav.com>. Terms of Use are available at <http://secureav.com/terms.pdf>.

**COMMENTARY TO
AMCC III.b – *TRAINING AND PROFICIENCY***

---

b. participate in flight safety education programs,

The FAA and many aviation associations encourage continuing pilot participation in diverse safety programs.[1] Some safety programs, such as the FAA-sponsored *Pilot Proficiency Program* ("WINGS" and "SEAWINGS") satisfy the requirements of a flight review.[2] The WINGS program, a recognition by the FAA that there is difference between what is safe and what is legal, provides an excellent opportunity for the GA community to commit to stricter recurrent training guidelines and must be strongly promoted.[3] Completion of such programs implies that a pilot has demonstrated "the safe exercise of the privileges of the pilot certificate."[4] Other initiatives and methods, including those within the FAA's Safety Program,[5] proprietary training, and computer-based[6] and on-line[7] programs may offer useful training/safety education.

Quality of Training - Other than the certification of flight schools and training centers (under FAR Parts 141 *Pilot Schools*, and 142 *Training Centers,*[8] respectively), there are no industry or governmental mechanisms for the accreditation of flight-training programs. The majority of training providers are governed solely "by the regulatory approval processes [which] might not keep up with the training quality that our industry needs."[9] "Emerging changes in system safety philosophy and changes in NAS [the National Airspace System] flight procedure and in flight technologies may call for a new approach to flight training"[10] and perhaps "massive cultural change."[11] As a consequence, some Part 61 training facilities are evolving their curriculum to transcend government minimum regulatory requirements.

Quality of flight training is ensured indirectly via certification of flight instructors.[12] Flight instructors are charged with maintaining continuity, ensuring consistency, inspiring professionalism,[13] and adding perspective to flight training programs. This underscores the importance of choosing a qualified and effective instructor.[14]

**

---

[1] *See, e.g.,* Robert A. Wright, *Meeting the Safety Challenge*, FAA AVIATION NEWS, (July-Aug. 2004), p. 37 (urging that it is "an effective way to stay current and effective").

[2] FAR 61.56(e) *Flight review, available at* < http://www.faa.gov >, *also available at* < http://risingup.com/fars/info/part61-56-FAR.shtml >; FAA, AC 61-91h *Pilot Proficiency Award Program* (Apr. 26, 1996), *available at* < http://www.faasafety.gov/about/AC61-91H.pdf >.

[3] Email from Cary Green, Manager of Training, Commercial Airline Pilot Training (CAPT) Program, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (Sept. 30, 2005).

[4] FAR 61.56(a)(2), *available at* < http://www.faa.gov >, *also available at* < http://risingup.com/fars/info/part61-56-FAR.shtml >.

[5] *At* < http://www.faasafety.gov/default.aspx >. For GA, the Safer Skies Program emphasizes training to avoid controlled flight into terrain, weather and improved pilot decision-making.

[6] *See* Mike Coligny, *Future of Flight Sims*, NAFI MENTOR, Nov. 2004, p. 11 (noting the success of desktop interactive Computer-Based Training (CBT) and its potential value in aviation).

[7] *See, e.g.,* AOPA ASF, *IFR Adventure: Rules to Live By, at* < http://www.aopa.org/asf/ifradventure/ >.

[8] *See* FAA, *Part 142 Training Centers, available at* < http://www.faa.gov >, *also available at* < http://risingup.com/fars/info/142-index.shtml >.

[9] NBAA, *Guidelines for Business Aviation Pilot Training,* § 3.7, p. 11 (Sept. 1, 2002), *available at* < http://www.nbaa.org >. Training providers could establish a quality audit function, and some larger providers could consider achieving an ISO 9002 or equivalent approval. Perhaps a customized (and financially suitable) instantiation of an ISO 9000/9001-like process could contribute to the quality in flight training. AS 9100 comprises the ISO 9001:2000 quality system requirements supplemented by additional quality system requirements established by the aerospace industry – an international effort by aerospace companies to establish a single quality management system, *at* < http://www.iaqg.sae.org/iaqg/publications/standards.htm >.

Other relevant initiatives include the DOT's Safety Oversight Program, as well as ICAO's and state-specific programs advancing quality of training. See, for example, the quality assurance program requirements in FAA, *Flight Simulation Device Initial and Continuing Qualification and Use; Proposed Rule*, 67 Fed. Reg. 60283, 60287-60283 (Sept. 25, 2002), *available at* < http://dmses.dot.gov/docimages/pdf1a/189052_web.pdf >.

[10] Robert A. Wright, Mgr., Gen. Aviation and Commercial Div. (AFS-800), Flight Standards Service, FAA, *Changes in General Aviation Flight Operations and their Impact on System Safety and Flight Training* (White Paper v. 1.0 Mar. 2002), p. 6 (copy on file with author). *See* AMCC VI, *Use of technology*.

Consider also the relative effectiveness of the FAA written examinations. "It's generally accepted that if the percentage of people passing a multiple-choice examination is under 75 percent the exam is effective, but FAA's rate of successful exam results, is about 96 percent—showing the exams to be weak." Robert M. Buck, THE PILOT'S BURDEN 144 (Iowa State U. Press 2000).

[11] Robert Wright, *quoted in* Tom Benenson, *Developing the Training that FITS*, FLYING, July 2003, pp. 80, 81.

[12] *See* FAR 61.3(d) *Flight instructor certificate, available at* < http://www.faa.gov >, *also available at* < http://risingup.com/fars/info/part61-3-FAR.shtml >. There are no currency requirements. And, CFIs are neither periodically flight tested nor orally quizzed. Rather, they renew by attending a class or on-line seminar. Also, there are no requirements for aerobatic instruction. *See* FAA Level I *Statement of Aerobatic Competency*, Sect. 4 (July 30, 2002), *available at* < http://www.faa.gov/library/manuals/examiners_inspectors/8700/volume2/media/2_031_00.pdf >.

[13] "Flight instructors should teach professionalism by example—by being a role model and by mentoring. But having said that, there's really no substitute for experience and maturity" Telephone Interview with Sandy Hill, VP, NAFI (Sept. 28, 2005). Students pick-up on very subtle clues. "The single most important, if not the only genuinely important part of teaching professionalism radiates from the law of primacy. The people doing the teaching at each and every level must adhere to the strictest of codes of conduct and must demonstrate their discipline while teaching students." Email from Jeremy R. Jankowski, Capt., Chautauqua Airlines (Sept. 27, 2005). *See* NAFI, *Code of Ethics*, *available at* < http://www.nafinet.org > (includes "setting an example of self-discipline for all pilots"). *See generally* Commentary to AMCC I.e, *Aspire to professionalism*, *available at* < http://www.secureav.com/Comment-AMCC-I.e-General-Responsibilities.pdf >.

[14] *See* STUDENT PILOTS' MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT, III.f., *Require professionalism from your flight instructor*, and its Sample Recommend Practice, *available at* < http://www.secureav.com/StudentPilot-v1.1-1.pdf > (addressing communication with and possibly changing flight instructors).

Query the benefits of choosing CFIs with professional achievement recognition, such as a NAFI Master CFI designation, *at* < http://www.nafinet.org/mastercfi/ >. Such designations indicate advanced skill and commitment to aviation education. Also, "[c]onsider the experience level of the instructors, recognizing that the average experience and age level is young. There are no longer any old and experienced flying instructors found in flying schools these days. There is little wisdom being passed down to students these days." Interview with Frank Hofmann, Sec'y, Canadian Pilots and Owners Ass'n, in São Paulo, Braz. (Oct. 4, 2002). Further, consider the relative benefits of engaging more than one CFI. Doing so may provide additional varying perspectives, emphasize differing skills and safety issues, and provide for more consistent availability.

<div align="center">***</div>