

Checklist

Doing the Right Thing = Having the Right Stuff

An FAA colleague includes the following Michael Josephson quote as part of her standard e-mail signature line:

An ethical person ought to do more than he's required to do, and less than he's allowed to do.

We focus in this issue of the magazine on human factors, and that quote certainly captures some of the core conundrums for us imperfect humans. In a world that too often condones “good enough” and too often encourages “just

don't get caught” permissiveness, it is also a powerful reminder for aviators. Skills and practices characterized as

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“good enough” are never good enough for safety, and we often gain more—especially in questionable weather—when we do “less” than the rules and regulations permit. I also think of that sentence as the essence of what my boss, Flight Standards Service Director John Allen, wrote about the issue of professionalism in this issue's “Jumpseat” column. If you've been listening to the news lately, you know that FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt has been emphasizing professionalism as well.

Flying to Code

So what is professionalism, and how do you put that seemingly abstract concept into practice? There are plenty of resources available, but here's one that you should consider adding to your flight bag and, more importantly, to your mindset: The Aviator's Model Code of Conduct.

Created by Michael Baum, a commercial pilot, author, attorney, and former Internet security executive and “organizationally neutral” in terms of its ownership and association, the Aviator's Model Code of Conduct (AMCC) presents broad guidance and recommendations that general aviation pilots can use to improve airmanship and flight safety, and to sustain

and improve the GA community. There are several variants, but the basic AMCC document addresses:

1. General Responsibilities of Aviators
2. Passengers and People on the Surface
3. Training and Proficiency
4. Security
5. Environmental Issues
6. Use of Technology
7. Advancement and Promotion of General Aviation

Be the Best You Can Be

Each section of the AMCC provides a list of principles and sample recommended practices. In so doing, it presents a vision of excellence and professionalism that supplements what is merely legal. As Baum notes in the AMCC introductory material:

The premise of this code is that ethics offers pilots an additional, systematic way to prepare for flying more safely. Ethics [...] complements all the regulations, instructional material, and experience we gain in aviation [and] a code of conduct based on ethics can keep pilots out of trouble. [...] It defines goals to help pilots improve their performance and achieve their potential. It clarifies community values and provides practical guidance for living by them. [...] Ethical behavior, constructive attitudes, and a positive culture add to safety for individual pilots and foster a healthy aviation community.

You can download the complete document (including kneeboard-friendly versions) from www.secureav.com. It is provided as a free public service to the aviation community. Read and heed!

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