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By Adrian Whitsett

# New co-pilot flight requirement grounds aviators

UPDATED 10:49 PM CST Jan 12, 2014

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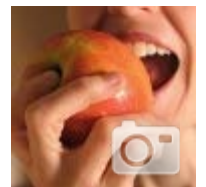
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Commercial flight co-pilots need five times as many flight hours than previously under a new law. With fewer people meeting the requirement, flights have been canceled on smaller airlines.

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“You need 1,500 hours basically to fly right seat for the airlines anymore,” said Jerome Howard, assistant chief flight instructor for Advance Air, Inc.

Future first officers need to spend tens of thousands of dollars for school, fuel and flight time. Howard said he believes some of his students at Advance Air in Council Bluffs will do a double take with the new law.

“They’re having second thoughts whether they actually want to do it or not,” Howard said. “Do I really want to go through all this to get into that right seat?”

Fewer co-pilots mean meeting the 1,500 requirement means fewer flights, which could take federal subsidies away if an airport doesn’t reach \$10,000 yearly passengers.

The law was written with safety in mind.

“The amount of hours that you get doesn’t necessarily mean that you’re going to be more proficient or a safer pilot. What it is is the experience,” Howard said.

The 1,500 hour rule has a few exceptions, such as military pilots with half that flight time. Also, pilots with bachelor’s degrees in aviation who have 1,000 can get a restricted air transport certificate and serve as co-pilots.

U.S. Sen. Mike Johanns wants a Senate committee to hold a hearing on the unintended consequences of the new law.

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**RM51** · a day ago

Seems like quite a few laws passed in this country have to be revisited because of unintended consequences show up later. Do all laws get passed first and then read

over later to find out what is in them like they did with the health care fiasco

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**GuestPoster** > RM51 • 16 hours ago

Do all laws get passed first and then read over later to find out what is in them like they did with the health care fiasco

According to ~~Nanny~~ Nancy Pelosi that's how it works.

And we haven't seen the best parts of the PPACA yet. (Look up Section 1311(h)(1)(B) in the PPACA legislation if you don't think so.)

GP

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**Joe A** > RM51 • 20 hours ago

Actually, a lot of laws/bills that get passed don't get much more than a quick skim through.

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**Janie Perry** • 19 hours ago

I guess some of you haven't flown in a small 1 engine aircraft. We who have to fly these small aircraft, call them puddle jumpers. The last time I flew on one, the pilot had us all move to the back of the plane so he could take off. Pretty nifty huh? You don't become a co pilot after completing your training. You do start on a small plane. duh

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**Levi Bultez** • a day ago

Who wrote this article? Maybe they should pay attention to grammar & context...serious!

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**Don** > Levi Bultez · 21 hours ago

REALLY! Why do they show a small "private" plane when the story relates to "commercial" passenger aircraft? The flight hours needed are accumulated by flying jet aircraft not single engine planes.

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**RM51** > Don · 19 hours ago

They all start with small planes to get some knowledge and flight time, I don't think that you don't go directly from some classroom instructions to the right seat of a jetliner. Small planes are kinda fun to ride in.

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**Joe A** > Don · 20 hours ago

you do realize single engine planes are used for commercial passenger aircrafts right? Just because they're showing a 4 seater doesn't mean all single engine planes are 4 or less pasengers lol. I'd like to see you make that argument after taking puddle jumpers around in Alaska... I've been in about a 10 passenger single engine prop plane before. I've also seen many various size of single engine prop planes, so think before you comment :)

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**Dean J** · a day ago

great point RM51

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**Papa Tango** > Dean J · 15 hours ago

The 4500 ft. altitude is not a good altitude for a single engine plane to fly at. It's a good altitude for a jetliner to fly at.

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