

# Wing

Summer 2013

# Tips

Des Moines Flight Standards District Office



## FAA Continues to Refine Medical Certification Process

The FAA has taken another step to enhance the medical certification process for general aviation pilots without compromising safety.

The FAA's Office of Aerospace Medicine has identified 11 medical conditions that no longer require pilots to seek special issuances and deferred certification from the agency's aviation medical examiners (AMEs).

Among the conditions covered by this decision are arthritis, asthma, kidney stones, various forms of cancer, colitis, and migraine and chronic headaches.

With nearly 400,000 medical applications filed annually by pilots, Aerospace Medicine has been working over the past few years to speed up the certification process.

One of Aerospace Medicine's first major steps was the development of MedXPress, the FAA's automated application process. More than 90 percent of pilots can now walk into an AME's office with completed applications, receive their examinations, and leave with their medical certificates in-hand.

The remaining 10 percent or so of pilots had conditions that required special issuances that delayed certification. So Aerospace Medicine's next step was to expedite their handling through the AME assisted special issuance process (AASI).

AASI permits aviation medical examiners to issue pilots a special issuance certificate for certain medical conditions at the time of examination, provided the applicant has complied with certain pre-specified conditions.

As Federal Air Surgeon Fred Tilton noted, the FAA wasn't ready to stop there. "The next logical step was to reduce the number of medical conditions requiring a special issuance, and I am pleased to report that we have done just that," said Dr. Tilton in an open letter to the agency's AMEs.

"I can almost hear the collective sighs of relief from those pilots, because few, if any, view the medical examination as anything other than a necessary evil," Tilton wrote to the AMEs. "They will make the medical examination process easier for you and the airmen you serve, and it will also help us to reduce the time that other airmen experience as they wait for us to approve their special issuances for more complicated medical conditions."

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"Never reach out your hand unless  
you are willing to extend an arm."

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## Start Spreading the News



JetBlue is the latest in the list of airlines to adopt NextGen procedures. In June, the airline has started allowing pilots to take a more efficient curved path into runways 13L and 13R at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

As is the case with other NextGen routes, the new approaches create more predictability into one of the busiest airports in the country. It allows the airlines to move passengers in and out of the airport faster while also reducing the environmental impact of each flight. The airline is predicting that it will save about 18 gallons per flight by flying the precision satellite route.

It could also help ease delays and cancellations. The NextGen procedures have approved lower landing weather minimums, allowing planes to land during certain weather patterns. That could equal major shifts when factoring in the busiest airspace in the world where poor weather can stymie whole boards of flights across the country.

While JetBlue is the first at JFK, other airlines are currently testing precision navigation at major hub airports. It is expected that the same benefits of time and fuel saved will be realized wherever NextGen precision approaches are flown.

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“He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life.”

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### **First Class Medical Certificate Requirement for Pilots Exercising the Privileges of an Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) Certificate**

**Purpose:** This InFO advises Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 121 air carriers and pilots of the requirement for all pilots exercising the privileges of an ATP certificate to have a first class medical certificate.

**Background:** In accordance with the Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Extension Act of 2010, Public Law (P.L.) 111-216, section 216, pilot flight crew members who are authorized to operate in part 121 operations must have obtained an ATP certificate, issued under part 61 by August 2, 2013, regardless of the FAA's progress in related rulemaking. As a result of that requirement, all pilot flight crew members will be exercising the privileges of an ATP certificate and, therefore, will be required to hold a first class medical certificate per § 61.23.

The FAA emphasizes that P.L. 111-216 does not include any grandfathering provisions for current pilot flight crew members who hold commercial pilot certificates. In addition, the regulations currently do not allow a pilot exercising the privileges of an ATP to hold any medical certificate other than a first class medical certificate.

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“A dream you dream alone is only a dream.  
A dream you dream together is reality.”

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## **Scrape-and-Go Landing**



*From NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting*

A malfunctioning gauge, failure to use a checklist, and the absence of a gear warning horn were all factors in this blade-bending low approach.

A student pilot and I were performing practice landings in a C172RG. On the upwind of a touch and go, we noticed that the manifold pressure gauge was reading atmospheric pressure no matter what the throttle position. The engine was still performing normally, but we decided to make the next landing a full stop. I took the controls momentarily on the start of the downwind so that the student could tap the gauge. We exchanged controls again and requested a full stop. We were performing short approaches and got clearance for another short approach. The student reduced throttle (the manifold gauge still read atmospheric pressure) and selected flaps to 20 degrees. We touched down gear up, the Student added power and I took the controls and put the gear down.

As I climbed out, an aircraft in the run-up area notified Tower about what had just occurred. Tower asked if we needed any assistance. The plane was flying normally so we declined, obtained a clearance to land and flew the pattern. I flew the

aircraft, performed a soft field landing and taxied back. Upon shut down, it was found that the prop did strike the ground.

There were several human factors involved. I failed to verify that the gear was down with my own checklist. I also relied on the aircraft too much to warn us that the gear was not down, but due to the fact that the manifold pressure was at an atmospheric level and the flaps were only at 20, the horn did not go off.

The cause of the prop strike was lack of checklist usage, lack of communication during the exchange of controls, fixation on the inoperative instrument, complacency, and failure to verify that the gear was down...Also, we should have notified Tower of the manifold pressure situation. It might have slowed us down in the cockpit as well as drawn attention to us by the Tower who may have notified us that our gear was still up.

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"Be as smart as you can, but remember that it is always better to be wise than smart."

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## FAA Approves Longer Service Life for Eclipse Jets

A cutting-edge welding technology that eliminates the need for 7,000 rivet holes give Eclipse 500 and 550 jets some real staying power, now officially recognized by the FAA. Eclipse Aerospace announced June 6th that the service life of the new Eclipse 550, along with Eclipse 500 jets produced in years past, is now extended to 20,000 hours/20,000 cycles, with no calendar life limit. The company said this means the typical Eclipse owner can look forward to more than 50 years of operation.

"Once again, Eclipse has delivered on our commitment to our customers. To reach this goal, Eclipse invested hundreds of hours and several

million dollars into this project. An actual Eclipse Jet was subject to the movements, loads, and fatigue that would normally be experienced over more than 60,000 flight operations. This testing also validated the strength and superiority of our patented Friction Stir Welding process," said Cary Winter, senior vice president of Engineering, Manufacturing, and Technical Operations, in a news release.

Eclipse is the first in the aerospace industry to implement the specialized welding process that eliminates the need for holes that can lead to stress cracks, and triples the strength of the welded joints compared to traditional methods. The company announced at a customer event that an actual airframe was subjected to the movements, loads, and fatigue that would normally result from 60,000 operations, simulating loads generated by pressurization cycles, flight, and landings.

The FAA life cycle extension also applies to the 260 Eclipse 500 airframes that the company supports. Eclipse powered up the first production model of the 550, which retails for less than \$3 million, in March.

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"Be like a duck. Calm on the surface, but paddling like the dickens underneath."

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## Weather and Aeronautical Information Services Data Link Issues



*The following article courtesy of NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System.*

In cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS) initiated a study of meteorological (MET) and aeronautical information services (AIS) received via data link. The purpose of the study was to analyze information from users of data link technologies as reported in ASRS incident reports. Qualitative assessments of available records provided valuable insight on data link user interface and actual cockpit experiences

related to data link weather or AIS information. The preliminary findings in the Study included:

The following ASRS report excerpts were taken from the data set that was used for the Meteorological and Aeronautical Information Services Data Link Study.

### TFR Troubles

The ASRS Data Link Study noted that a number of incident reports cited missing, inadequate or late AIS data. This PA-28 Pilot's experience was an example of how delayed TFR information can "pop up," after it is too late.

■ I departed...and flew direct...on a VFR flight. I thought I was departing just prior to the Presidential TFR, which I believed to be starting in 15 minutes.... Unfortunately I was mistaken on the TFR start time either due to a change or an error on my part, but the TFR went into effect two minutes before I departed. I was asked upon landing to call the FAA, which I did.... The AWOS that I checked via phone prior to departure did not have any special NOTAMs for the TFR.... In addition, my Garmin 496 must have been delayed with the data feed because I only saw the TFR pop up on my display as I was leaving the TFR.

### "I Thought I Would Have an Uneventful Arrival"

When fast moving convective activity is present, more than a good preflight briefing and onboard NEXRAD information may be needed to keep up with current conditions. After enduring an unexpected "flight" on the ramp, this M-20 Pilot recognized that a false sense of security was a factor in his not getting real time data from Flight Watch.

■ Just prior to departure I received a full VFR weather briefing which contained no SIGMETs. The forecast was VMC for the entire route. Mention was made of some convective activity, but it was not expected to affect my route of flight. Enroute, I had access to XM weather and SkyRadar. One hour prior to my ETA, I noticed a large cell with Level 6

activity within.... I made some preliminary plans for an alternate, but as I approached within 20 minutes of my destination, I thought I would have an uneventful arrival. ATIS was reporting winds 280 degrees at 10 knots gusting to 14 knots with a broken ceiling at 5,500 feet. Approach Control.

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"Live a good honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time."

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## FAA Seeks Input on New Test Standards

If you have any opinions about the FAA's proposed revisions to the knowledge tests for private pilot and instrument rating, the FAA wants to hear them, but don't delay -- the comment period closes July 8. This is the second go-round after an initial comment period closed on May 24, just a few days after the FAA Safety Team sent out a notice about the planned revisions. The FAA says it got about 130 comments during that first period, and will be starting to review them now. To read the revised standards or to file comments, go to the federal docket and enter the code FAA-2013-0316. Documents with details about the proposed revisions can be found here. More information is posted in the Federal Register notice.

The revised tests will aim to align knowledge-test standards with the flight-proficiency standards set out in the existing practical test standards, and will incorporate risk management throughout, according to AOPA. "For too many, the knowledge test was often viewed only as a hurdle one needs to get over in order to get their certificate -- something to get out of the way," said David Oord, AOPA manager of regulatory affairs and co-chair of the industry/government working group that is developing the new standards. "By clearly laying out the knowledge a pilot needs to know with the skills they must have, and incorporating risk management throughout the standard, a pilot will



have the foundation they need to fly safely. Everything from the beginning of training, through the written test, and ending with the practical test will be anchored to the standards."

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"Be careful of your thoughts;  
they may become words at any moment."

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## NOTAMS Available on FAA Mobile



In an effort to improve access to FAA information and regulations, the agency recently enabled the ability to view Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) on mobile devices. Visit [faa.gov/mobile](http://faa.gov/mobile) on your mobile device and you will see the option to look up NOTAMs by airport code.

NOTAMS are just one of the many resources available to users on FAA Mobile. The mobile page offers instant access to some of the most popular features of [faa.gov](http://faa.gov), including: N-number inquiry, U.S. airport status and delays, Advisory Circular lookup, Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) lookup, wildlife strike reporting, news and updates, and laser strike reporting.

FAA Mobile is not a mobile app; you do not have to buy or download it from an online store. Rather, it is a set of pages optimized for viewing on mobile devices as opposed to traditional-sized workstations and laptops.

## ACCIDENTS

The commercial pilot in an Enstrom F-28C was doing aerial survey and decided to make an off airport landing when a door came open. The pilot made a hard landing causing the main rotor blade to cut off the tail rotor. The pilot and passenger escaped injury during the landing.

A private pilot in a PA-22 was involved in a landing accident when he lost control during roll-out. The aircraft exited the runway and flipped over causing substantial damage. The pilot and passenger escaped injury.

A commercial pilot and a CFI experienced a loss of power in their PA-28 and made an off airport landing in a field. The passenger sustained minor injuries. The aircraft had substantial damage as the right main gear and nose gear separated during the landing.

A student pilot was on his first solo flight when he landed hard and caused damage to the propeller and firewall.

## INCIDENTS

A private pilot in a MO-20 was involved in a landing incident when he returned to land shortly after takeoff due to a rough running engine. The pilot stated he forgot to lower the landing gear which resulted in minor damage to the aircraft. Investigation revealed possible fuel contamination caused the rough-running engine.

**Until Next Time! Have a Safe Flight**

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**HOURS OF OPERATION  
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY  
7:45 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.**

*Visitors are requested to make appointments.*

**The DSM FSDO will be closed on the following dates  
in observance of a national holiday:**

**July 4, 2013  
September 2, 2013**

**Independence Day  
Labor Day**