

Aviation Legislation

The Ninety-Nines, Inc.

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Concerns with: Sport Aviation; Photo Certificates; Alien Training; Charitable Flights

With the potential for women to have a less expensive pilot certificate - the Sport Pilot Certificate - I'm anxious to see just how many and how soon we actually have women with the new rating. With only the first eight (8) examiners qualified for this certificate, it may take longer than expected to begin having applicants for membership. That's OK, we can wait and hope that things begin to move faster. Our application forms have been modified and now provide for Light Sport Pilot applicants and even students. With a valid state license (and if they have not been denied a medical certificate) women may now fly any of the planes that fit the criteria for Light Sport Aircraft. I'll repeat the brief summary of specifics for Light Sport Aircraft just as a reminder.

Aircraft: Maximum of two seats and max gross weight of 1,320 lbs; fixed gear only - max cruise 120 knots

Training: Minimum of 20 hours - knowledge and flight testing required

Flight restrictions: No night flight; no flight in Class B, C or D airspace (w/o training); no less than 3 miles visibility; no more than 1 passenger; no Charity flights; no flight outside U. S. airspace

The Senate and House are still considering which would require FAA to issue new pilot certificates with photo and possibly other identification within six months. The time frames have not been firmed up and there is even a possibility that FAA may require everyone to have the newer pilot certificates (currently with no photograph) by a specific date. I certainly hope they can get the two things coordinated so that we are not required to get a new certificate just in time to have to change again to one with a photo. This is beginning to feel like the right hand (or Congress) not knowing what the left hand is doing.

The post 9/11 attitude of protecting the public from pilots has given us the Transportation Security Administration's alien training rule. While clearly the intent of Congress was to deal with foreign terrorists attempting to get flight training in the States, and we can't object to that, the requirements are still complicated even after many modifications. I just hope that all of our 99s who are certificated instructors have had their TSA training by now and that the paperwork requirements have been greatly modified. I'm just glad they dropped some of the documentation required for additional ratings and biennial flight reviews.

We still don't have final regulations on Charity Flights. The many comments on the Notice of Proposed Rule Making and the comments in the meetings on this subject may not change the original proposals, but we can hope so. Some states (most notably New Jersey) are still trying to legislate who can fly and where they can fly, with the same old proposals for background checks and such to be paid for by the pilots.

I hope no one expects that I claim to "know it all," on any of these subjects. My hope is just to put an idea out so that if you are interested in any of the laws or regulations currently being considered, this report will give you enough information to trigger your curiosity and encourage you to research the many sources of information available these days on your own. Then I hope all of you will share your information with us.

Charli Lamb, Adviser