

Framework for approving pilot development schemes

Introduction

Many pilots suffer a loss of motivation and purpose after qualifying for their licence, leading to them giving up flying within a few years.

Some lack the confidence or incentive to gain more benefit from their licences, and never take further training apart from their biennial instructional check flight.

We know that pilots who continue to develop their flying skills are safer, and there are many 'add-ons' such as the IMC, night rating, aerobatics, and instructor ratings that develop not only greater proficiency, but also far greater levels of personal confidence.

We are keen to encourage aviation organisations to create their own schemes that will stimulate pilots to develop their skills. We can endorse these schemes and welcome proposals for our consideration.

Any submitted scheme should ideally comply with this simple framework.

Our Pilot Recognition for Operational Up-skilling and Development (PROUD) framework

'Proud to develop piloting skills' - an initiative supported by the CAA

Schemes should have a logical hierarchical progression through clearly defined steps, which if completed, would lead to a formal recognition within the scheme of the achievement at that level. The scheme should include a minimum of three levels. Within each level of the scheme, there should be requirements to fulfil targets in each of the following areas.

Flying experience

Flying experience is essential. So the number of hours required for qualification at each level, should be set at levels appropriate for the award, taking into account minimum total flight time, and hours acting as aircraft commander.

Ratings and qualifications

Just flying more hours doesn't necessarily mean you have a greater depth of knowledge or breadth of experience. So the scheme should require additional training or achievements leading to the addition of ratings or certificates.

To qualify for each level of award there could be a requirement to add a further two flying achievements. The list below is not exhaustive but gives examples of the scope for pilots to select a combination of achievements that suit their personal choices.

- IMC rating
- Night rating
- Instrument rating
- Flight instructor rating
- Multi engine rating
- Seaplane rating

Differences training

Training that doesn't lead to a specific rating should also be considered. This could include differences training such as:

- Tailwheel conversion
- Variable pitch propeller
- Glass cockpit training.

Activities

There are also many organised flying activities that encourage pilots to challenge themselves, such as:

- Compete in a Royal Institute of Navigation challenge
- Compete in a Royal Aero Club air race
- Complete a British Aerobatics Association competition

Safety event attendance

At least one seminar should be attended to qualify at the lower entry level, two attendances at an intermediate level, and three or more for the advanced level. Available safety events include:

- GASCo safety evening
- Military civil air safety days
- Aircraft maintenance engineering course
- Flight instructor seminars
- PPL master classes

Extended navigational challenges

Many pilots never venture out of their local area, which is both limiting in terms of enjoyment and fulfilment, but also stifles development and confidence. The schemes should therefore include an element of longer navigational flights, which would be increasingly more demanding.

A suggested basic profile is:

To gain an award at a lower level, pilots would have to complete a cross country flight more challenging in terms of distance or navigation skills required than the navigational exercise undertaken for the initial issue of the pilot licence. Flights should include landings and take-offs from at least two airfields en route. The route could also include a sea crossing of more than 20nm.

For a higher level, a more challenging cross country flight should be accomplished, with at least three intermediate landings and take offs. If desired, elements of the route may include a sea crossing of more than 20nm

For the highest award, the participant should have completed the flights for the lower awards, and subsequently completed a much more demanding cross country with at least four intermediate landings. If desired, elements of the route may comprise of a sea crossing of more than 20nm.

How to apply for endorsement

If you wish to create a developmental scheme to be endorsed under our PROUD framework, then please submit your proposals, demonstrating how your programme satisfies the suggested framework.

If we think it complies then we'll grant you an endorsement (which will include a CAA PROUD logo) which you can then use when you publicise the scheme.