

# Introductory Flights – Guidance to Operators



**Published by the Civil Aviation Authority, 2018**

Civil Aviation Authority,  
Aviation House,  
Gatwick Airport South,  
West Sussex,  
RH6 0YR.

You can copy and use this text but please ensure you always use the most up to date version and use it in context so as not to be misleading, and credit the CAA.

**First published 2018**

Enquiries regarding the content of this publication should be addressed to [GA@caa.co.uk](mailto:GA@caa.co.uk)

The latest version of this document is available in electronic format at [www.caa.co.uk](http://www.caa.co.uk)

# Contents

---

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	4
<b>Chapter 2: Guidance</b>	5
<b>Chapter 3: Explanation of Terms</b>	6

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This information is intended to provide guidance for individuals and organisations regarding introductory flights performed by a training organisation (ATO / DTO or until April 2019 RTF's) or by an organisation created with the aim of promoting aerial sport or leisure aviation.
- 1.2 This information supersedes that given on "Introductory Flights" contained in IN-2015/029.
- 1.3 EASA Air Ops includes a derogation for introductory flights at article 6.4(c) to be flown in accordance with the operating rules for non-commercial flights subject to specific conditions. The conditions for conducting an introductory flight are that:
  - 1.3.1 The aircraft is operated by an Approved Training Organisation (ATO), Declared Training Organisation (DTO) or a Registered Training Facility (RTF, until April 2019), or an organisation created with the aim of promoting sport or leisure aviation,
  - 1.3.2 The pilot in command (PIC) is suitably licensed, rated and within the relevant recency requirements,
  - 1.3.3 Only other-than complex motor-powered aircraft may be used,
  - 1.3.4 The principal place of business should be in an EASA Member State,
  - 1.3.5 The aircraft is operated by the organisation on the basis of ownership or dry-lease;
  - 1.3.6 The flight does not generate profits distributed outside of the organisation; and
  - 1.3.7 Whenever non-members of the organisation are involved, such flights represent only a marginal activity of the organisation.
- 1.4 EASA Air Ops NCO.GEN.103 allows introductory flights when conducted in accordance with paragraph 1.3 of this guidance and likewise shall comply with the below:
  - 1.4.1 The flight must start and end at the same site, except for gliders or balloons,
  - 1.4.2 Shall only be operated by day, in compliance with Day Visual Flight Rules (VFR)
  - 1.4.3 Shall be overseen by a person nominated by the relevant organisation (as per EASA Air Ops Regulation 6.4(c)) to be responsible for the safety of those involved,
  - 1.4.4 Shall comply with any other conditions specified by the Competent authority.
- 1.5 Article 15 of the Air Navigation Order 2016 (ANO) allows introductory flights for non-EASA, aircraft provided that you comply with the conditions set out in paragraph 1.3 and 1.4 and providing the following conditions for the flight are also met:
  - 1.5.1 Is treated as a commercial operation for the purposes of Part 4 of the ANO – Airworthiness
  - 1.5.2 Non-EASA aircraft are restricted to flights within the London and Scottish FIRs unless the permission of the relevant authority has been given.
- 1.6 The derogations for introductory flights also apply to aerobatic flights and those conducted by parachuting organisations and gliding clubs.
- 1.7 While holders of private licences may conduct introductory flights, they may not personally receive any remuneration or valuable consideration for doing so.

## 2 Guidance

- 2.1 Any organisation conducting introductory flights should inform potential passengers that such flights are not required to conform to the same safety regulations as those conducting Commercial Air Transport (CAT) / Public Transport (PT) operations.
- 2.2 The aim of the introductory flights is to attract new trainees or new members. They are not designed, and should not be sold, to replace EASA Part FCL Exercise 3: Air Experience flight, in which a qualified instructor would typically give a demonstration of the controls and some flight training exercises with the participant handling the aircraft. Flight time as a passenger on an introductory flight will not count as training towards the grant of a pilot's licence.
- 2.3 Passengers should be made aware that the pilot may amend or cancel the flight for any reason, including at short notice and is under no obligation to complete it.
- 2.4 An introductory flight should consist of an air tour of short duration. The PIC cannot hand over control of the aircraft to the passengers at any time unless he/she is the holder of a valid instructor's certificate.
- 2.5 A marginal activity should be understood as representing a very minor part of the overall activity of the organisation. An organisation intending to offer such flights as regular business activity is not considered to meet the condition of a marginal activity.
- 2.6 Flights organised with the sole intent to generate income for the organisation are not considered to be a marginal activity.
- 2.7 An 'organisation created with the aim of promoting aerial sport or leisure aviation' means a non-profit organisation, established under applicable national law for the sole purpose of gathering persons sharing the same interest in general aviation to fly for pleasure or to conduct parachute jumping and aerobatic flights.
- 2.8 Aircraft registered in a Third Country (e.g. the Isle of Man, Jersey, USA) are required to comply with the relevant EASA Ops rules if based in an EASA Member State. However, they may also be required to abide by the regulations of the State of Registry which may prohibit conducting such introductory flights.
- 2.8 The operator and PIC should assess the risk to the occupants of the aircraft and should include an assessment of:
  - The pilot's currency/recency,
  - Familiarity with the aircraft to be used and the associated emergency procedures,
  - Aircraft weight and balance and performance calculations,
  - The proposed location, route, airspace and any operational restrictions,
  - Weather forecasts, actual and trends; remember the flight must be conducted in accordance with VFR by day only.
  - Any other criteria which should reasonably be considered as part of the overall risk assessment should be completed for each flight to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for the participant/s.

### 3 Explanation of Terms

- 3.1 “EASA aircraft” means an aircraft which is required to hold an EASA certificate of airworthiness, an EASA restricted certificate of airworthiness or an EASA permit to fly by the Basic Regulation and any implementing rules adopted by the Commission in accordance with that Regulation.
- 3.2 “non-EASA aircraft” means an aircraft which is not required to hold an EASA certificate of airworthiness, an EASA restricted certificate of airworthiness or an EASA permit to fly by the Basic Regulation and any implementing rules adopted by the European Commission in accordance with that Regulation and is generally covered by Annex II to the Basic Regulation.
- 3.3 “Introductory flight” means any flight against remuneration or other valuable consideration consisting of an air tour of short duration, offered by an approved training organisation or an organisation created with the aim of promoting aerial sport or leisure aviation, for the purpose of attracting new trainees or new members.
- 3.4 An aircraft is deemed to be in “flight” from the moment when, after the embarkation of its crew for the purpose of taking off, it first moves under its own power, until the moment when it next comes to rest after landing
- 3.5 Article 6.(4a)(c) of EASA Air Ops applies to other-than complex motor powered aircraft conducting introductory flights as follows:

*‘introductory flights, parachute dropping, sailplane towing or aerobatic flights performed either by a training organisation having its principal place of business in a Member State and approved in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1178/2011, or by an organisation created with the aim of promoting aerial sport or leisure aviation, on the condition that the aircraft is operated by the organisation on the basis of ownership or dry lease, that the flight does not generate profits distributed outside of the organisation, and that whenever non-members of the organisation are involved, such flights represent only a marginal activity of the organisation.*

- 3.6 A ‘complex motor-powered aircraft’ means:
- (i) an aeroplane:
    - with a maximum certificated take-off mass exceeding 5,700 kg, or
    - certificated for a maximum passenger seating configuration of more than 19, or
    - certificated for operation with a minimum crew of at least two pilots, or
    - equipped with (a) turbojet engine(s) or more than one turboprop engine, or
  - (ii) a helicopter certificated:
    - for a maximum take-off mass exceeding 3,175 kg, or
    - for a maximum passenger seating configuration of more than 9, or
    - for operation with a minimum crew of at least two pilots, or
  - (iii) a tilt rotor aircraft;

A “non-complex motor-powered aircraft” or “other-than complex motor-powered aircraft” (which includes sailplanes and balloons) should be construed accordingly.

3.7 The ANO contains similar definitions at Schedule 1:

“non-commercial flight” means a flight which is not a commercial operation flight, a public transport flight or a flight for the purpose of commercial air transport;

“valuable consideration” means any right, interest, profit or benefit, forbearance, detriment, loss or responsibility accruing, given, suffered or undertaken under an agreement, which is of more than a nominal nature.