

student pilot for the knowledge exam. Video tapes are also available (with closed captioning) to assist student pilots studying for the exam. Many flight schools also conduct ground instruction in a regular classroom scenario, but you would have to advise the flight school that it would have to locate and arrange for interpreters under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The IDPA or local deaf advocate organizations would be able to assist the flight school in locating interpreters. Again, check with your local FSDO for flight schools in your area.

Q. Do I need an interpreter for the computer based knowledge exam?

A. No, it is simply a multiple choice exam administered by computer.

Q. Where are the knowledge exams given?

A. Computer testing centers are located in most major metropolitan areas. For a current listing of those in your area, contact your local FSDO. The exams are given at your convenience.

Q. To obtain a private pilot certificate, is there a requirement for operations at a controlled airport?

A. Yes, a requirement of the private pilot certificate is to perform three takeoff and landings at a controlled airport to demonstrate your ability to communicate with the tower.

Q. How does a deaf pilot complete this requirement for a private pilot certificate?

A. The student and instructor need to work with the local airport personnel. Light gun signals are available for aircraft that do not have radios or in case of a radio failure. With prior permission, a

deaf pilot can communicate with the tower by the use of the light gun signals.

Q. How does a deaf pilot determine the traffic direction at an airport?

A. An aircraft without radio communications remains out of the airport area and observes the traffic landing and departing. Additionally, the pilot looks for the wind sock or segmented circle, where available, to determine wind direction or direction of landing. The pilot enters the traffic pattern as recommended in the Aeronautical Information Manual and by regulation (14 CFR part 91, subpart B).

Q. How does a deaf pilot obtain a weather briefing?

A. The Direct User Access Terminal System (DUATS) is available at most general aviation airports or on personal computers to provide weather information to pilots. A deaf pilot can also use a Relay Service to access a Flight Service Station briefer at 1-800-WXBRIEF (1-800-992-7433).

Q. How does a deaf pilot complete the practical test's oral and flight portions?

A. The practical test is completed using a detailed written "plan of action" as described in the appropriate Practical Test Standards (PTS). This plan of action will include all required Tasks in each Area of Operation and should not differ significantly from the process followed by the instructor and the applicant in preparing for the practical test.

For additional information please contact any of the following sources.

International Deaf Pilots Association

Clyde Smith, President
RR 1 Box 99
E-1 Gravel Springs Road
Jacksonville, IL 62650
217-243-0065 (Voice/TTY)
217-243-0066 (Fax)
e-mail clymar@csj.net

Federal Aviation Administration

General Aviation and Commercial Division
Certification Branch, AFS-840
800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20591
202-267-8196

Federal Aviation Administration

Aeromedical Certification Division
FAA Aeronautical Center
PO Box 25082
Oklahoma City, OK 73125
405-954-4821
Office of Aviation Medicine - AAM
Washington, DC 20591
202-267-3835

Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

421 Aviation Way
Frederick, MD 21701
301-695-2137
301-695-2375 (Fax)

For Additional Reading:

Federal Aviation Administration Order 8700.1,
General Aviation Operations Inspectors Handbook,
Chapter 27, "Conduct a Special Medical Test,"
available from your local FSDO or the Internet http://www.faa.gov/avr/afs/faq/8700_vol2/2_027_00.pdf

"Closed Captioned Flying"
AOPA Pilot, February 1988
(Back issues available from AOPA for a fee)



TO FLY

AN INITIAL GUIDE FOR DEAF PILOTS AND THEIR INSTRUCTORS



MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT DEAF PILOT CERTIFICATION

Q. If I am deaf, can I obtain a pilot certificate?

A. Yes, an individual who is deaf can obtain a pilot certificate in one of the five categories of aircraft: airplane, rotorcraft, glider, powered-lift, or lighter-than-air.

Q. What are the grades of pilot certificates?

A. There are five grades of pilot certificates that are available: student pilot, recreational pilot, private pilot, commercial pilot, and airline transport pilot.

Q. What types of certificates can a deaf pilot obtain?

A. A deaf pilot can obtain a student pilot certificate, recreational pilot certificate, private pilot certificate, and, on a limited basis, a commercial pilot certificate; for example, agricultural aircraft operations, banner towing operations, or any operation which does not require radio communication. With new interface technology for in-cockpit receipt of weather information and digital communication, additional pilot certificates may be available to deaf pilots in the future.

Q. What are the differences in the certificates?

A. A student pilot certificate is designed for the initial instructional period of flying. The student pilot is limited to flying with the flight instructor or solo after appropriate instructor endorsements (Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) sections 61.87 and 61.89). A recreational pilot certificate limits the holder to

specific categories and classes of aircraft, the number of passengers which may be carried, the distance that may be flown from the departure point, flight into controlled airports, and other limitations (14 CFR section 61.101). A private pilot certificate permits the pilot to carry passengers and provides for limited business use of an airplane (14 CFR section 61.113). A commercial pilot certificate permits the pilot to conduct certain types of operations for compensation and hire (14 CFR section 61.133).

Q. Are there limitations placed on a deaf pilot's certificate?

A. Yes. A deaf pilot's certificate will include the limitation, "Not Valid for Flights Requiring the Use of Radio" (14 CFR section 61.13).

Q. How do I choose a flight school and flight instructor?

A. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) has a book available on choosing your flight instructor and flight school. The International Deaf Pilots Association has information regarding flight instructors who know how to sign. Generally speaking, you should visit the location to observe the professionalism of the school. You will need to discuss your particular degree of hearing impairment with the flight instructor and establish how to communicate best with each other. Have the flight instructor you select contact the IDPA for additional advice and assistance.

Q. When is a medical examination required?

A. All student pilots must obtain at least a third class airman medical certificate from an FAA Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) before the first solo flight, except for gliders and balloons, which do not

require a medical certificate.

Q. Are there special medical requirements for the deaf pilot?

A. Yes, a deaf pilot is required to submit the results of a hearing exam to the medical examiner or the FAA in order to satisfy the medical exam. He or she must also take a Special Medical Flight Test in the later stages of flight instruction to demonstrate the following: 1) recognition of engine power loss or engine failure by a change in vibration and by instrument scan; 2) recognition of approaching stall by aerodynamic buffet and visual cues; and 3) recognition of retractable gear emergencies by observation of gear warning lights (if applicable). Upon the successful completion of the Special Medical Flight Test, the FAA will issue a second-class or third-class medical certificate and a Statement of Demonstrated Ability (SODA). This can be done at a Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) of choice.

Q. Are there limitations placed on a deaf pilot's medical certificate and SODA?

A. Yes, Both the medical certificate and the SODA will have the limitation "Not valid for flying where radio use is required." Additional limitations may be placed on the medical certificate and SODA by the Aeromedical Certification Division as appropriate to the class of medical certificate.

Q. What are the hourly requirements in becoming a pilot?

A. 14 CFR part 61 (Certification: Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors) prescribes the hourly requirements for the issuance of pilot certificates and ratings. A person applying for a private pilot certificate in airplanes, helicopters, and gyro-

planes must log at least 40 hours of flight time, of which at least 20 hours are flight training from an authorized instructor and 10 hours of solo flight training in the appropriate areas of operation; three hours of cross country; three hours at night, three hours of instrument time; and other requirements specific to the category and class rating sought. Private pilots in gliders and lighter-than-air aircraft must have logged from an authorized instructor a similar number of hours and/or training flights, which include both cross country and solo according to category and class rating sought. Though the regulations require a minimum of 40 hours flight time, in the U.S. the average number of hours for persons without a hearing impairment completing the private pilot certification requirements is approximately 75 hours.

Q. Are there any tests required to become a student pilot?

A. No. To obtain a student pilot certificate you must pass the medical exam discussed earlier. (Before the first solo, you must pass a written exam administered by your flight instructor (14 CFR section 61.87).) To obtain a higher certificate you must pass a knowledge and practical test. The knowledge test is administered by computer and is good for a period of two years. The practical test examines your flying skills and ability against a published standard during an examination flight with a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) in the category and class of aircraft in which you are getting your pilot certificate. Part of the practical test is an oral examination administered by the DPE.

Q. How do I prepare for the knowledge exam?

A. An instructional kit is available at most flight schools to help prepare the