

Flyabout December 2013 – Part 61

Some regulatory changes are being introduced on 4 December 2013. A number of areas are affected, including licensing, flight training and operations. The rules are designed to reflect International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) best practice, and they will all be found in the one place, as Civil Aviation Safety Regulations will replace the Civil Aviation Regulations (CARs) and Civil Aviation Orders (CAOs).

The new legislation for flight crew licensing is Civil Aviation Safety Regulation – Part 61. For licensed pilots, the most noticeable change is that on your first interaction with CASA after 4 December, you will be issued a licence in a slightly different format. Your Part 61 licence will be ICAO compliant, which means it will be easier to use overseas. Your current licence is valid for 4 years from December 4th, or until you get a new Part 61 licence.

CASA has written a booklet describing the Part 61 changes. It can be found at: <http://www.casa.gov.au/wcmswr/assets/main/lib100191/part61booklet.pdf>. But I'll just touch on a few of the changes that are likely to be relevant to club members.

Licences

Your new licence will list all your flight privileges, some of which are currently recorded only in your logbook. The licence will show your licence type, category ratings, aircraft class and type ratings, design feature endorsements, operational ratings, and flight activity endorsements. A couple of these terms are new, so they're described briefly below.

At the starting end of the market, student pilot licences will no longer exist, and the GFPT will be replaced by a recreational pilot licence (RPL). An RPL will limit the pilot to the training area or a 25 nm radius from the departure aerodrome, and to day VFR flying in a single-engine aircraft.

A RPL holder will need to do flight reviews, so a pilot who has done GFPT will be able to exercise the privileges of a RPL once he/she has done a flight review.

Nothing much is changing for PPL's, except that a PPL must include all classes of airspace to be ICAO compliant.

Aircraft category ratings

The category ratings are:

- Aeroplane (A)
- Helicopter (H)
- Powered-lift aircraft (P)
- Gyroplane (G)
- Airship (AS)

So most club members will have a PPL (A) or CPL (A).

Aircraft class and type ratings

Class and type ratings are quite different under Part 61. They replace aircraft class and type endorsements.

There will be five class ratings:

- Single-engine aeroplane (SEA)
- Multi-engine aeroplane (MEA)
- Single-engine helicopter (SEH)
- Multi-engine helicopter (MEH)
- Airship (AS)

This means all your twin endorsements will now be covered by the class rating MEA, so when you first learn to fly a twin, you'll get MEA on your licence instead of PA44 or BE76 or PA31 in your logbook. Any new twin you want to fly will require you to demonstrate that you understand it and can fly it safely, but it won't be another endorsement. In this respect it's like the current endorsement for single-engine aeroplanes below 5700 kg, where learning to fly a new one is not a new aircraft endorsement.

Some aircraft such as multi-crew aircraft and most helicopters will have individual type ratings.

Aircraft design feature endorsements

These are largely unchanged. For instance, the common aeroplane design feature endorsements such as retractable undercarriage and manual propeller pitch control are unchanged. (MPPC replaced the CSU endorsement a while back, because aeroplanes like the Cirrus have a CSU but only one power lever, so learning to fly a Cirrus won't get you the endorsement for the fine art of using two levers to change power settings.)

Operational ratings

The concept of operational ratings won't change. Unlike type and category ratings, which state what you can fly, operational ratings state what you can do with the aircraft. The ones that are likely to apply to us are unchanged, such as instrument ratings, PIFR, NVFR and instructor ratings. There are some new ones that were previously logbook endorsements, such as a low-level or aerial application rating, which is for flight below 500 ft AGL.

Endorsements on operational ratings

Each rating has endorsements attached. For instance, a NVFR rating may be endorsed for single-engine aeroplane (SEA) or multi-engine aeroplane (MEA). Examples of endorsements on an aerial application rating include aeroplane (A) and firefighting aeroplane (FFA).

Flight activity endorsements

Like operational ratings, these specify what you can do with an aircraft. These are items that were previously stamped on a page in your logbook, while your ratings were stamped in the front, complete with the ATO's sticky label. Now everything will be on your licence. Flight activity endorsements include:

- Glider towing

- Aerobatics (above 3000 ft AGL)
- Aerobatics (500) – aerobatics above 500 ft AGL
- Spinning
- Parachute dropping

An example

Let's look at an example of a pilot who has a number of ratings and endorsements. Let's call our sample pilot Claude. Under the current CAR Part 5, Claude has:

- An aeroplane PPL
- A helicopter PPL
- NVFR rating for aeroplanes and helicopters, with NDB and VOR
- Design feature endorsements for constant speed unit, retractable undercarriage and tailwheel, for aeroplanes
- Aircraft type endorsements for:
 - Single-engine aeroplanes <5700 kg MTOW
 - PA44
 - PA61
 - BE58
 - BE76
 - Robinson R22
 - R44
 - Bell JetRanger
 - Note: the last 3 are types in which the wings move faster than the fuselage, which means they're dangerous!
- Aerobatics and formation endorsements

The NVFR rating, and type and design feature endorsements, are in the front of the logbook, or if our pilot Claude is old and bold and earned them prior to December 1991, they're on his licence. His aeros and formation endorsements are on a page of his logbook.

The next time CASA hears from Claude, which will be when he earns a new rating or endorsement or a new medical, or does an AFR, he'll get a new licence under CASR Part 61 with these privileges:

- PPL (A)
- PPL (H)
- NVFR – SEA, MEA, SEH (The nav aids do not migrate to the new licence)
- Aircraft class ratings – SEA, MEA
- Aircraft type ratings – R22, R44, Bell 206
- MPPCA (manual propeller pitch control – aeroplanes)
- RUA (retractable undercarriage – aeroplanes)
- TWU (tailwheel undercarriage)
- AERO (aerobatics >3000 ft AGL)
- FMN (formation)

To get all this printed on his new licence, Claude will need to photocopy the pages of his licence or logbook that show his licences, endorsements and ratings, have those pages certified by someone who can witness a stat dec, and post it all off to CASA.

Flight reviews

One notable change is that all operational ratings will require flight reviews. Instrument and instructor ratings have always needed renewal, but now a NVFR rating will also require a review. This shouldn't be particularly onerous if you think about it. Every year you need to do a 1-hour flight at night, so if every two years you do that with an instructor, you're legal. The exact requirements will of course depend on the organisation where you do the AFR.

Have a look at the link above to the booklet, or go to the CASA website and go to the Licensing Regulations link for more information, and please give me a call if you have any questions.

Kevin