

# View from the top: DPE Corner

Excerpt from Wings and Wheels Newsletter

Over the course of my career as a pilot, I've taken numerous check rides; a part of being a scheduled airline pilot means that you have to take one at least every 12 months. A couple of summers ago I had come to the conclusion that sitting down for a practical test should be a no-stress event for me... boy, was I mistaken! The final step for any pilot to receive a new certificate, or to add privileges to an existing one, is a check ride with an authorized examiner. In my case, I was scheduled to take a check ride with a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) to add Instrument Airplane privileges to my CFI certificate. Considering how frequently I have to take check rides at work I was surprised how nervous I became in the days leading up my event. At the end of the check ride, it was clear that my nervousness wasn't needed, but it was a great reminder to me as a DPE of what applicants may deal with before their evaluation.

## Check ride Suggestions

- What I offer to you in this issue of the Wings and Wheels newsletter is some suggestions to keep in mind that will help ease your stress ahead of your check ride, as well as some pointers to carry with you through the practical test.
- You wouldn't be scheduled for your check ride if your CFI didn't think that you were ready for it. Be confident in yourself and skills, but don't let your ego run away with the show either.
- Read the introduction to the Practical Test Standards. It is frequently common for applicants to jump straight into the areas of operation in the PTS and skip the intro. Within the introduction are special emphasis items that the examiner will evaluate throughout your practical test; not all of these are listed within the tasks.
- Clear the area before performing stalls. Along the same lines as the previous point, clearing turns are specifically listed within the task standards for stalls, but they are explicitly called for in the listed reference of the Glider Flying Handbook (FAA-H-8083-13a). Failure to performing clearing turns before executing the required stall(s) is almost a guaranteed way to have a successful check ride snatched away, and to have to sit down with an examiner again.
- Present all of your logbooks that are representative of the time that you listed in section III of your 8710 / IACRA application. If you have 120 flights across three logbooks the examiner is obligated to see all three logbooks when accepting your application. The same holds true if you're adding a glider category to your current pilot certificate; if you list 5,000 hours of airplane time in your application bring your logbooks that reflect that experience.
- If you're taking a practical evaluation for grade of certificate above a Private Pilot, or if you're adding Glider Category to your existing Private Pilot certificate, be prepared to present evidence that you're in compliance with 61.56. There are several ways that you can comply with this section of Part 61; know which provision you're using and have it marked for the examiner.

Your Examiner wants to see you succeed!

By the time you meet with the examiner on the day of your check ride, you've invested a significant amount of time, effort, and financial resources. Know that the examiner wants to see you succeed, but you must perform to the standards of the PTS. These points can help ensure that the examiner is able to hand you a new temporary airman's certificate at the end of your check ride.