



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

Advisory Circular

Subject: WINGS—Pilot Proficiency Program

Date: 10/30/24

AC No: 61-91K

Initiated by: AFS-800

Change:

- 1 PURPOSE OF THIS ADVISORY CIRCULAR (AC).** The objective of the WINGS—Pilot Proficiency Program is to reduce the number of accidents in General Aviation (GA) by assisting pilots to find educational opportunities designed to help them apply the principles of risk assessment and risk management (RM). When properly applied, these principles will help mitigate accident causal factors associated with common pilot errors, lack of proficiency, and faulty knowledge. The Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) purpose is to encourage the majority of GA pilots, through WINGS, to engage in ongoing, targeted flying tasks and learning activities keyed to identified risks and which are designed to mitigate those risks. The FAA continually collects and assesses its databases to identify the risks associated with GA flying and incorporates risk mitigation strategies into initial and ongoing pilot education.
- 1.1 Advisory Material.** The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way, and the document is intended only to provide information to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.
- 2 AUDIENCE.** The primary audience for this AC is GA pilots (including student pilots) and flight instructors. The secondary audience includes ground instructors, flight schools, and all stakeholders supporting GA pilot safety and training.
- 3 WHERE YOU CAN FIND THIS AC.** You can find this AC on the FAA’s website at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/advisory_circulars and the Dynamic Regulatory System (DRS) at <https://drs.faa.gov>.
- 4 CANCELLATION.** AC 61-91J, WINGS—Pilot Proficiency Award Program, dated February 16, 2011, is canceled.
- 5 BACKGROUND.** To address accident causal factors associated with common pilot errors, lack of proficiency, and faulty knowledge, the FAA developed a voluntary pilot education and proficiency program (i.e., WINGS) and made it available via the internet to all pilots at all certificate levels. The WINGS Program consists of learning activities and tasks selected to address the documented causal factors of aircraft accidents. Accomplishment of a phase of WINGS requires the participating pilot to demonstrate proficiency in specified knowledge and skill tasks. The FAA encourages pilots to participate in ongoing aviation educational learning and skill-building events with an instructor. The WINGS Program provides the opportunity, the structure, and the

recognition for pilots to continue their aviation education. This ongoing effort fosters learning, review, and flight proficiency in the areas of operation found in current Airman Certification Standards (ACS) and practical test standards (PTS). The FAA further encourages pilots to maintain proficiency by using the WINGS Program. To this end, the WINGS Program has three levels of participation: Basic WINGS, Advanced WINGS, and Master WINGS. Within each level, a pilot may earn phases of WINGS as explained below and at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>.

6 DISCUSSION. Accident data point to specific areas of pilot operations where knowledge, skill, or decision-making ability are causal factors in the accidents or incidents. Aviation experts have identified hazards associated with GA flying. Accident and incident data indicate the most common situations where hazards become risks. The WINGS Program targets flying situations and knowledge areas where unmitigated risk is most likely to result in an accident. Prior to the implementation of this new WINGS Program, a review of all aircraft accidents in the United States over a 2-year period was conducted. This review resulted in a list of accident causal factors, by aircraft category and class, which appeared most often in accident reports. The activities and tasks required for completion of a phase of WINGS address these causal factors. For example, poor aeronautical decision making was cited by accident investigators as a primary accident causal factor in many accidents. Hence, the WINGS Program requires successful completion of an activity on the subject of aeronautical decision making as one of the requirements for a phase of WINGS. Likewise, other accident causal factors cited in reports, such as performance and limitations, preflight planning, positive aircraft control, basic flying skills, and takeoffs and landings are required for completion of a phase of WINGS. For the purposes of the WINGS Program, these accident causal factors are conveniently arranged in three knowledge and flight areas as described on <https://www.FAASafety.gov>. Required WINGS activities may be revised over time and reflected on <https://www.FAASafety.gov> whenever statistical data indicates a change is necessary.

7 APPLICABILITY.

- 7.1 Who May Participate.** All pilots (including student pilots) holding an FAA-issued pilot certificate and any required medical certificate may participate in the WINGS Program. Pilots should request certificated or authorized flight instructors, flight schools, and qualified FAA Safety Team (FAASafetyTeam) industry members to participate with them in the WINGS Program. We encourage FAA-approved Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part [142](#) training centers to invite their customers to participate in WINGS by following the special simulator-based syllabus available at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>. Pilots operating under 14 CFR parts [91](#) subpart [K](#) (part 91K), [121](#), [125](#), and [135](#) may also participate and benefit from the safety-related information associated with the WINGS Program. There is no limitation on participation in the WINGS Program for pilots who may have been involved in an accident or incident, as such pilots are encouraged to participate.
- 7.2 Incentive Awards.** Pilots who participate in the program and satisfactorily complete a current phase of WINGS will not have to complete the flight review requirements of

14 CFR part [61](#), § [61.56](#). Section 61.56(e) states that a participating person does not need to accomplish the flight review requirements of part 61 if, since the beginning of the 24th calendar month before the month in which that pilot acts as pilot in command (PIC), the person has satisfactorily accomplished one or more phases of an FAA-sponsored pilot proficiency award program. Each time a pilot earns a new phase of WINGS, it satisfies the flight review requirement regardless of how frequently or closely spaced the phase or award.

7.3 Training Requirements. Pilots earn a phase of WINGS by successfully accomplishing a specified number of knowledge and flight tasks. The requirements of these tasks, as found in the current ACS or PTS, correspond to leading accident causal factors, as described in paragraph [6](#) above. Each time the pilot successfully completes the specified set of tasks, the pilot earns another phase of WINGS.

- 7.3.1** Pilots must complete all of the required set of tasks for a phase of WINGS, three knowledge and flight activities, within a 12-month period to count toward that phase of WINGS. When pilots complete the set of tasks for a phase of WINGS, that phase of WINGS is valid for 12 months. Current requirements of the WINGS Program are available at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>.
- 7.3.2** The WINGS Program generally requires pilots to demonstrate proficiency in both knowledge areas and flight maneuvers. Although a demonstration of proficiency is not always possible for knowledge activities such as safety seminars, a demonstration of proficiency is always required for flight activities and online courses. The appropriate ACS or PTS contains proficiency standards, including specific tasks for airplanes, rotorcraft, powered-lift, gliders, lighter-than-air, powered parachutes, and weight-shift control. The PTS also includes light-sport category aircraft of all types. Pilots may earn one phase of WINGS in an airplane, another phase in a helicopter, another phase in a hot air balloon, and so on.
- 7.3.3** Pilots with multiple aircraft ratings select the category and class of aircraft in which they wish to receive training and demonstrate their flight proficiency. Pilots may demonstrate all proficiency requirements for any phase of the WINGS Program in the same category and class or may demonstrate those skills in any category and class for which they are rated.

8 GENERAL INFORMATION.

- 8.1 Tasks.** The WINGS Program has two main components: knowledge tasks and flying tasks. While most required activities are automatically selected for the participating pilot, participants may choose some tasks to suit their individual flying needs from a list of activities, events, and seminars, as explained at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>.
- 8.2 Completion of Knowledge Portion.** Pilots can accomplish the knowledge portion in two ways:

- 8.2.1** Pilots can choose from a broad selection of online courses and safety programs available at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>. Pilots receive automatic WINGS credit for successfully completing a qualifying online course.
- 8.2.2** Pilots may also accomplish knowledge tasks at FAASTeam-sanctioned safety meetings that conform to established selection criteria. Pilots who sign an attendance roster at the event will receive credit for their attendance when the FAASTeam officially closes the event at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>. Note that when pilots sign the attendance roster, they must use the same email address that is or will be used on <https://www.FAASafety.gov>.

Note: Flight tasks are accomplished, and skills are demonstrated, to a standard of proficiency with an instructor who is authorized to give such flight instruction.

- 8.3 Accessing Accomplishments and Validations.** The pilot's accomplishments and validation record is available at the pilot's secure WINGS home page at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>. Pilots may allow others, such as an insurance company or aircraft rental agency, to view this secure document as necessary. Pilots can also print verification certificates for paper-based recordkeeping.
- 8.3.1** A pilot must accomplish flying tasks with a qualified instructor, and that instructor must verify that the pilot accomplished the selected tasks to the appropriate standards. The pilot can accomplish documentation of these events online when the instructor, or other identified representative, verifies the accomplished work. The pilot may also use the <https://www.FAASafety.gov> system to email a credit validation request to the instructor as explained at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>. Flying tasks reflect related ACS or PTS tasks. The FAA will update the flying tasks whenever a related part of the ACS or PTS changes, or when accident data indicates that a change is needed.
- 8.3.2** Pilots who do not have personal access to digital devices and wish to participate in WINGS can seek assistance from a WINGS instructor, a FAASTeam representative, or a FAASTeam Program Manager (FPM). These individuals, or anyone with a digital device and internet access, can assist the pilot in creating an account on <https://www.FAASafety.gov>.
- 8.4 Levels and Phases of WINGS.** There are three levels of WINGS:
- Basic WINGS.
 - Advanced WINGS.
 - Master WINGS.
- 8.4.1** The standards for completion of phases at the Basic level of the WINGS Program are generally based on Private Pilot ACS. (A person holding a sport or recreational pilot certificate may use those standards at the Basic level.) Likewise, the performance standards at the Advanced level of WINGS are generally based on the commercial pilot

standards. For the Master level, they are generally based on the airline transport pilot (ATP) and commercial pilot with instrument and/or flight instructor standards.

- 8.4.2** Pilots may earn an unlimited number of phases within each of the three levels of WINGS by completing the required activities for a phase of WINGS. The WINGS Program requires all participants to complete Phase 1 at the Basic WINGS level before pilots can receive credit for additional phases or advance to any of the higher WINGS levels. Primary accident causal factors are the basis for the required tasks for all phases at the Basic WINGS level and form a strong foundation for earning additional phases or advancing to higher levels. To reinforce a pilot's understanding of primary accident factors and to emphasize basic knowledge and flying skills, a pilot must complete a phase of WINGS at the Basic level at least once every 12 months.
- 8.4.3** The design of the proficiency requirements for the Advanced and Master levels of WINGS are for pilots who wish to train and study at a level that demands greater proficiency. Once a pilot completes Phase 1 at the Basic WINGS level, they may participate in the Advanced WINGS level. For the Master WINGS level, pilots must have completed at least one phase in the Advanced WINGS level. Each pilot's My WINGS page at <https://www.FAASafety.gov> will acknowledge and record all the accomplishments of that pilot in WINGS, recognizing both the phase(s) earned and the level(s) of WINGS within which the pilot achieves them. Each level, accompanied by an increasingly higher phase number within each level, indicates the pilot's commitment to ongoing and consistent training. Pilots can print certificates with this indication from <https://www.FAASafety.gov> for any phase or level at any time.
- 8.4.4** In addition, since completion of any phase of WINGS at any level satisfies the requirement for a flight review (as specified in § 61.56(e)), the pilot's My WINGS page at <https://www.FAASafety.gov> will also acknowledge this. Pilots can print a wallet-sized certificate with flight review information at any time.
- 8.5 Instructor Information.** Instructors are an integral part of the aviation community and, by modeling the best practices, play an important role in reducing the number of GA accidents. Because of this vital role, we strongly encourage instructors to earn a phase of WINGS themselves. However, there is no requirement for instructors to hold a current phase of WINGS to provide WINGS-qualified instruction. Instructors are eligible to establish their flight instructor recent experience through participation in WINGS. The holder of a current flight instructor certificate, who serves as a flight instructor in the FAA's WINGS program, may establish their flight instructor recent experience in accordance with the following criteria, which is contained in the current edition of FAA Order [8900.1](#), Volume 5, Chapter 2, Section 11, Conduct a Title 14 CFR Part 61 Flight Instructor Initial Certification, Additional Category/Class Ratings, Recent Experience Validation, and Reinstatement of Privileges, available via DRS at <https://drs.faa.gov>. That flight instructor must:
- 8.5.1** Hold a flight instructor certificate and meet the appropriate flight instructor recent experience requirements (i.e., a recent experience period that has not lapsed),

- 8.5.2** Have satisfactorily completed at least one phase of WINGS (at any level) in the preceding 12 calendar months,
- 8.5.3** Have evaluated at least 15 recognized WINGS flight activities (any level) during which the flight instructor evaluated at least five pilots and made appropriate endorsements in the logbook of each pilot,
- 8.5.4** Present a record to an aviation safety inspector (ASI), aviation safety technician (AST), or authorized designated pilot examiner (DPE) showing that the flight instructor has met the requirements of subparagraph 8.5.3 above within the preceding 24 calendar months before the month in which they validate their flight instructor recent experience, and
- 8.5.5** Present a completed FAA Form [8710-1](#), Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application, to a person authorized to validate flight instructor recent experience.

Note: The FAA prefers that the Integrated Airmen Certification and/or Rating Application (IACRA) be used.

- 8.6 WINGS Program Modifications.** Modifications to the WINGS Program that are minor in nature will be made and explained at <https://www.FAASafety.gov> without further need of revision to this AC.
- 8.7 Frequently Asked Questions.** Additional information about the WINGS Program and answers to many commonly asked questions can be found on the “FAQ” page at <https://www.FAASafety.gov>. Pilots may also use the “Contact Us” link at the <https://www.FAASafety.gov> home page for more complex questions about the WINGS Program.
- 8.8 Authorization for Completing WINGS Tasks.** An authorized instructor can record completed tasks of WINGS not recorded automatically at <https://www.FAASafety.gov> in a logbook or other proficiency record with an endorsement similar to the following. This provides verification for later recording at <https://www.FAASafety.gov> by an authorized individual:

“I certify that (pilot’s name), holder of pilot certificate No. XXXXX, has satisfactorily demonstrated proficiency in the required tasks as outlined in the WINGS—Pilot Proficiency Program, activity number XXX on (date).”

“Instructor Name, Certificate Number, Recent Experience (RE) End Date, and Signature”

- 8.9 Authorization for Completing WINGS Phases.** An FPM or authorized instructor may endorse the pilot’s logbook upon issuance of a phase of WINGS (as verified by a review of the pilot’s WINGS completion certificate) as follows:

“I certify that (pilot’s name), holder of pilot certificate No. XXXXX, has satisfactorily completed a phase of the WINGS Pilot Proficiency Program on (date) as outlined in the

current edition of Advisory Circular (AC) 61-91, WINGS—Pilot Proficiency Program, which meets the requirements for a flight review as specified in § 61.56(e)."

"Instructor Name, Certificate Number, Recent Experience (RE) End Date, and Signature"

Note: There is no requirement for this final endorsement, but an authorized individual may use it to prove that the pilot completed a flight review.

- 9 AC FEEDBACK FORM.** For your convenience, the AC Feedback Form is the last page of this AC. Note any deficiencies found, clarifications needed, or suggested improvements regarding the contents of this AC on the Feedback Form.



Robert Ruiz for
Lawrence Fields
Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

Advisory Circular Feedback Form

If you find an error in this AC, have recommendations for improving it, or have suggestions for new items/subjects to be added, you may let us know by contacting the General Aviation and Commercial Division at 9-AFS-800-Correspondence@faa.gov or the Flight Standards Directives Management Officer at 9-AWA-AFB-120-Directives@faa.gov.

Subject: AC 61-91K, WINGS—Pilot Proficiency Program

Date: _____

Please check all appropriate line items:

An error (procedural or typographical) has been noted in paragraph _____
on page _____.

Recommend paragraph _____ on page _____ be changed as follows:

In a future change to this AC, please cover the following subject:
(Briefly describe what you want added.)

Other comments:

I would like to discuss the above. Please contact me.

Submitted by: _____

Date: _____