

## Title 14—AERONAUTICS AND SPACE

### Chapter I—Federal Aviation Agency

[Docket No. 6181; Amdt. 61-18]

#### PART 61—CERTIFICATION: PILOTS AND FLIGHT INSTRUCTORS

##### Helicopter Rating Experience Requirements

The purpose of this amendment is to provide an increased experience requirement for a pilot with an airplane rating who applies for an additional rotorcraft category rating with a helicopter class rating. Under this amendment to § 61.17 (b), the applicant must have had a total of at least 25 hours of flight instruction from an appropriately rated flight instructor and solo flight time, instead of 15 hours as previously required. In addition, the substitution of a flight instructor's recommendation for the flight time needed by an applicant for either a helicopter or gyroplane rating is deleted.

The amendment was proposed in Notice 64-41 and published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on August 29, 1964 (29 F.R. 12430). Over one-half of the comments received on the Notice concurred in the increased experience requirement without reservation or with the suggestion that still higher minimums should be provided. One helicopter manufacturer, supported by six other persons, concurred in the application of the increased experience requirement to applicants who are not FAA approved school graduates, but not in the application to FAA approved school graduates. One person, while neither concurring in nor objecting to the proposal, suggested that provision be made for the acceptance of "time" obtained in certain ground trainers.

Two comments objected to the increased experience requirements, calling attention to language in Notice 64-41 stating that past experience has shown that "most" pilots require more than 15 hours in order to acquire proper competency in the operation of a helicopter. These comments conclude that since many applicants have passed flight tests with less than 25 hours, the increased hours penalize the exceptionally capable applicant. The Agency does not agree with this position, since minimum standards do not presuppose unusual ability.

Three of the comments opposed the deletion of the current permission to substitute a flight instructor's recommendation for flight time. One comment suggested that instead of this deletion, that is intended to make the provisions consistent with present standards in Part 61 for other ratings or certificate actions, the latter should be amended to permit the same substitution. The second of these comments indicated a belief that the flight instructor's recommendation alone is an appropriate requirement, without specification of experience requirements expressed in terms of flight time. The third of these comments not only indicated opposition to deletion but also suggested that the instructor's recommendation be made mandatory in addition to the experience requirement.

After consideration of the comments, the Agency has decided to issue this amendment, for the reasons stated in Notice 64-41. The Notice proposed this amendment "without prejudicing different standards that may result from a comprehensive study being made for all categories and classes of aircraft." The Agency is engaged in such a study and evaluation of present pilot certification and ratings experience standards, and the points of issue raised by comments on Notice 64-41 have been included for consideration in the study. It is contemplated that, when this evaluation has been sufficiently developed, public participation will be sought, through an advance notice of proposed rule making, in the identification and selection of a tentative course or alternate courses of action. If the Agency should, upon further consideration of the problems and public responses, decide to proceed further, it would then issue subsequent notice.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment, and due consideration has been given to all relevant matter presented.

In consideration of the foregoing, paragraph (b) of § 61.17 of Part 61 of the Federal Aviation Regulations, is amended, effective April 4, 1965, to read as follows:

§ 61.17 Additional aircraft ratings after original issue of certificate (other than airline transport).

(b) *Rotorcraft.* A pilot holding an airplane rating who applies for a rotorcraft rating must pass an appropriate flight test, and—

(1) In the case of gyroplanes, have had a total of at least 15 hours of flight time in gyroplanes consisting of (i) flight instruction from an appropriately rated flight instructor and (ii) at least 5 hours of solo flight time; and

(2) In the case of helicopters, have had a total of at least 25 hours of flight time in helicopters consisting of (i) flight instruction from an appropriately rated flight instructor and (ii) at least 5 hours of solo flight time.

(Secs. 313(a), 601, and 602 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958; 49 U.S.C. 1364, 1421, 1422)

Issued in Washington, D.C., on February 26, 1965.

N. E. HALABY,  
Administrator.

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