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FAA Publishes Final Rule Updating FAR Parts 61, 91 And 141

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On August 21, 2009, the FAA published a Final Rule in the Federal Register that revises the training, qualification, certification, and operating requirements for pilots, flight instructors, ground instructors, and pilot schools. According to the Final Rule, “[t]hese changes are needed to clarify, update, and correct our existing regulations...to ensure a better understanding of these rules that relate to aircraft operations in the National Airspace System.”

The Final Rule contains a significant number of changes to FARs 61, 91 and 141 in a variety of areas. Fortunately, the Final Rule does not include changes to instrument currency requirements that the FAA proposed in its original notice of proposed rulemaking (“NPRM”). (The NPRM proposed requiring pilots to perform precision and nonprecision approaches; fly a missed approach; hold at a “radio station,” intersection, or waypoint; and conduct a one-hour cross-country flight, all in addition to the current instrument currency requirements.)

Pertinent changes include changing the duration of student pilot certificates to match the duration of a third-class medical certificate, changing the definition of “cross country” from “at least 50 nautical miles” to “more than 50 nautical miles,” adding training and currency requirements for the use of night vision goggles and allowing for issuance of flight instructor certificates and ratings to military instructor pilots and examiners who can show

HIGH ON HEALTH CONTINUED

like getting a whole new approach thrown at you just as you are coming up on the marker. This is a great way to make errors in either aviation or medicine. So please be sure we know about the important or puzzling stuff at the beginning of the visit.

In the research part of my life, I’m doing some work with the UW Department of Industrial Engineering working on patient safety issues. We are exploring these problems of information overload and what helps or hinders us as we deal with it. There’s a lot that the practice of medicine and aviation have in common. We need to work together to keep both safe!

In aviation, we say: “Don’t worry... You will eventually see the ground.”

In medicine, we say: “Don’t worry... All bleeding stops eventually.” □

having been designated as a U.S. military instructor pilot or examiner, to name a few.

The Final Rule went into effect October 20, 2009. If you would like further information regarding the Final Rule, you may contact John D. Lynch, Certification and General Aviation Operations Branch, AFS-810, General Aviation and Commercial Division, Flight Standards Service, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591; telephone (202) 267-3844; e-mail to john.d.lynch@faa.gov. For legal interpretative questions about this final rule, contact: Michael Chase, AGC-240, Office of Chief Counsel, Regulations Division, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591; telephone (202) 267-3110; e-mail to michael.chase@faa.gov.

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