

## ACS Benefits

---

The ACS:

- Provides clear information on what an applicant must *know, consider, and do* to qualify for a specific certificate or rating.
- Allows the FAA to develop test questions clearly tied to standards and supported by handbooks and guidance.
- Reduces subjectivity and increases standardization.
- Enhances safety by ensuring that standards, guidance and testing for airman certification all work together effectively.



Photo by Chris Morris

### For More Information

---

**Bob Newell**, Manager  
Airman Testing Standards Branch  
[Robert.L.Newell@faa.gov](mailto:Robert.L.Newell@faa.gov)  
405-954-0473

**Susan Parson**, Special Assistant  
Flight Standards Service  
[Susan.Parson@faa.gov](mailto:Susan.Parson@faa.gov)  
202-267-9064

[www.faa.gov/training\\_testing/testing](http://www.faa.gov/training_testing/testing)



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

**Introducing the ACS:**

# **Airman Certification Standards**



Photo by Chris Morris

## An Integrated Approach

The Airman Certification Standards (ACS) framework integrates and aligns standards, guidance, and testing for airman certification.

The ACS is built on today's Practical Test Standards (PTS), which establish skill performance metrics for each flight proficiency element listed in the regulations for an airman certificate or rating. The ACS enhances the PTS by adding aeronautical knowledge and risk management elements needed to support each PTS Task.

The ACS will not change or lengthen the check ride. Rather, its integrated approach will provide better guidance to applicants, instructors, and evaluators during each phase of the airman certification process.

It will also enable the FAA to keep airman testing fully aligned with regulations, performance standards for knowledge and skill, and guidance materials such as handbooks.

## Background

Since September 2011, the FAA has been working with aviation community stakeholders to help improve standards, guidance, and test development practices for airman certification.

Under the auspices of an Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) and the industry's Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC), three industry working groups have developed and refined the ACS framework. These groups have also made recommendations to improve the FAA's H-series handbooks and bring knowledge testing in line with accepted best practices.

The FAA is now supporting industry efforts to prototype use of the ACS approach. Feedback has been very positive. The agency continues working with industry to refine the ACS and plan for its implementation. The target date for releasing the ACS for Private Pilot Airplane (PAR) and Instrument Rating Airplane (IRA) is June 2016.

## ACS Coding

The ACS assigns a unique code to each knowledge, skill, and risk management element. These codes are anchored in the ACS, unlike today's reference-based Learning Statement Codes.

ACS codes will provide more accurate feedback to applicants, instructors, and evaluators. The ACS

codes will also enable the FAA to keep standards clearly aligned with guidance handbooks and test questions, and to develop timely and relevant test questions.

- PA** = Private Pilot Airplane (identifies applicable ACS)
- V** = Performance Maneuvers (identifies Area of Operation)
- A** = Steep Turns (identifies Task)
- K5** = Accelerated Stalls (identifies Task element)

V. Performance Maneuvers		
<b>Task</b>	<b>A. Steep Turns</b>	
<b>References</b>	FAA-H-8083-2, FAA-H-8083-3; POH/AFM	
<b>Objective</b>	To determine that the applicant exhibits satisfactory knowledge, skills and risk management associated with steep turns.	
<b>Knowledge</b>	The applicant demonstrates understanding of:	<b>Know</b>
PA.V.A.K1	1. Coordinated flight.	
PA.V.A.K2	2. Attitude control at various airspeeds.	
PA.V.A.K3	3. Maneuvering speed, including changes in weight.	
PA.V.A.K4	4. Controlling rate and radius of turn.	
PA.V.A.K5	5. Accelerated stalls.	
PA.V.A.K6	6. Overbanking tendencies.	
PA.V.A.K7	7. Use of trim in a turn.	
PA.V.A.K8	8. Aerodynamics associated with steep turns.	
PA.V.A.K9	9. Aerobic requirements and limitations.	
<b>Risk Management</b>	The applicant demonstrates the ability to identify, assess and mitigate risks, encompassing:	<b>Consider</b>
PA.V.A.R1	1. Dividing attention between airplane control and orientation.	
PA.V.A.R2	2. Task management.	
PA.V.A.R3	3. Energy management.	
PA.V.A.R4	4. Stall/spin awareness.	
PA.V.A.R5	5. Situational awareness.	
PA.V.A.R6	6. Collision avoidance. (Clearing the area).	
PA.V.A.R7	7. Importance of coordinated flight.	
<b>Skills</b>	The applicant demonstrates the ability to:	<b>Do</b>
PA.V.A.S1	1. Establish the manufacturer's recommended airspeed or if one is not stated, a safe airspeed not to exceed $V_x$ .	
PA.V.A.S2	2. Rolls into a coordinated 360° steep turn with at least a 45° bank, followed immediately by a 360° steep turn in the opposite direction.	
PA.V.A.S3	3. Perform the task in the opposite direction, as specified by the evaluator.	
PA.V.A.S4	4. Maintain the entry altitude, ±100 feet, airspeed, ±10 knots, bank, and ±5°, and roll out on the entry heading, ±10°.	

Aeronautical knowledge

Aeronautical decision-making and special emphasis

Flight proficiency