

NEW INSTRUMENT PRACTICAL TEST STANDARDS

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The new edition of the Instrument Practical test Standards is now in use. A review of the Areas of Operation and Tasks shows just a few changes from the previous version. However, the Special Emphasis Areas have been expanded significantly. There is a detailed summary of the Single Pilot Resource Management evaluation which will be conducted by Designated Pilot Examiners. The Great Lakes Designated Pilot Examiner Association has begun a review of how testing will be changed in accordance with this new set of requirements. The new Instrument test should be viewed as the paradigm of what is to come in testing for every rating. This will require a shift in training which will better prepare students for not only passing the test, but more safely conducting all future flight activities.

Before addressing the SRM subjects and scenario testing format, here are a couple of less sweeping, but still significant changes:

INOPERATIVE EQUIPMENT

If any equipment is labeled “Inoperative” a review of the maintenance logs will be conducted to determine that the appropriate procedures have been followed. It should be noted that continued operation of a plane with a permanently “Inop-ed” ADF, for example, is unacceptable. The equipment should be repaired or removed with a new weight and balance prepared. Inoperative equipment is not expected to remain that way beyond the next inspection period.

ICING

Area of Operation I, Task C—Cross Country Flight Planning has been expanded to cover some more specific testing on recognizing, discussing adverse effects of, and manufacturer's recommendations relating to icing. Area II, Task A continues with anti- and deicing equipment.

SPECIAL EMPHASIS AREAS

The biggest change involves an expansion of SRM and ADM into six specific topics with objectives of their own. These are to be applied to all Areas of Operation and evaluated in a matrix format found in the Appendix.

SINGLE PILOT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The information for this subject is contained in the introduction to the PTS. Too often this material is overlooked. You are urged to look closely at this material since it reflects the direction all testing will be taking in the future. Training should be changed to incorporate more emphasis on scenarios and risk management. If applicants are not familiar with this approach, the practical test will be far more challenging.

There are six items which will be emphasized as part of SRM:

1. Aeronautical Decision Making

Applicants should be able to respond to scenarios presented with an appropriate decision making process. They are expected to use a model such as the “DECIDE” or “3P” format to make decisions. Hazardous attitudes, risk management, CFIT, use of automation and other elements are included here.

2. Risk Management

Included here are tools such as the “PAVE,” “TM SAFE,” and “5P” checklists for assessing and managing risk.

3. Task Management

Managing priorities and handling of checklists while avoiding distractions are covered in this subject.

4. Situational Awareness

Maintaining an ongoing awareness of the status of the flight including weather, ATC, terrain, traffic, fuel and aircraft are some of the elements evaluated here.

5. Controlled Flight Into Terrain

Use of automated equipment, planning departures and arrivals, and aircraft performance are included here. Diversion planning and other variable event consequences will be covered.

6. Automation Management

More attention is being paid to the advanced avionics now available. Skilled and appropriate use, without undo distractions, will be evaluated. Potential systems failures and mode changes need to be monitored effectively.

This is only a brief summary of these elements which will now be emphasis areas on instrument tests. You should refer to the PTS for the details. It is clear that Examiners are expected to conduct thorough evaluations of these areas. Refer to Appendix 3 for the **Judgment Assessment Risk Matrix** and you will see how comprehensive the inclusion of the above items are to be in the test process. All Areas of Operation are included in evaluating the applicant's ability to manage risk. Use this as a guide for mock checkrides and you will find useful input for debriefing and refining training procedures.

In order to correctly prepare for the material which will be covered in these emphasis areas, refer to the list of publications on which the standards are based. These can be found in the introduction to the PTS. In addition, you should use FAA H-8083-2, Risk Management Handbook which covers all of these areas in detail.

Attached you will find a detailed sample of a scenario based test which is one of many that are being developed for use in training and testing. You will see that tests are evolving into a tool to evaluate potential real life experiences, rather than simple aircraft handling.