

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.204

National Policy

Effective Date:
1/11/13

Cancellation Date:
1/11/14

SUBJ: English Proficiency

- 1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice informs aviation safety inspectors (ASI) and Training Center Program Managers (TCPM) that international pilot certificate applicants have increased in many aviation flight schools and universities nationwide. Reports received indicate safety-related issues concerning language barriers to communications, as many international students' primary language is not English.
- 2. Audience.** The primary audience for this notice is the Flight Standards Regional Offices (RO), Operations Sections; Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO); TCPMs responsible for the oversight of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 142 Training Center Evaluators (TCE); and FAA Flight Standards Service (AFS) ASIs responsible for the oversight of Designated Pilot Examiners (DPE), 14 CFR part 141 and non-part 141 flight schools, certificated flight instructors (CFI), ground instructors (GI), FAA Safety Teams (FAAS Team), and Aviation Medical Examiners (AME). The secondary audience includes AFS branches, the FAA Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI), and divisions in the regions and in headquarters (HQ).
- 3. Where You Can Find This Notice.** You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee Web site at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's Web site at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.
- 4. Discussion.** Title 14 CFR parts 61, 63, and 65 address English language skills currently required for airman certification. Part 61 requires that pilots must be able to read, write, speak, and understand the English language. The current editions of Advisory Circular (AC) 60-28, English Language Skill Standards Required by 14 CFR Parts 61, 63, and 65; FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 5, Chapter 2, Section 5, Miscellaneous Part 61 Certification Information; FAA Order 8900.2, General Aviation Airman Designee Handbook, Chapter 2, Selection and Appointment; and practical test standards (PTS) provide guidance for airman applicants, training organizations, DPEs, TCPMs, TCEs, and ASIs in determining English language skills. The responsibility for ensuring applicants meet the English language eligibility requirements is shared by CFIs and GIs, part 141 and non-part 141 aviation pilot training schools, part 142 training centers, TCEs, DPEs, ASIs, and AMEs. Specific to AMEs, the Federal Air Surgeon's

Medical Bulletin, Volume 47, No. 4, states in part: “Medical examiners: An applicant for an Airman Medical and Student Pilot Certificate must meet the ICAO definition of ‘English Proficient,’ which is equivalent to the FAA’s long-standing basic English standard. If there is any doubt regarding the applicant’s English proficiency, **the AME must NOT issue the Student Pilot Certificate, and advise the applicant to report to the local Flight Standards District Office for further testing.**”

5. Action. Enter the results of each action into Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem (PTRS) as specified in paragraph 7.

a. Procedures for ASIs and TCPMs. Within 120 days of the effective date of this notice, ASIs and TCPMs must evaluate their respective pilot schools (certificated under part 141) and training centers (certificated under part 142). This evaluation is to ensure that the requirements and policy within part 61 and AC 60-28 and guidance within Order 8900.1, Volume 5, Chapter 2, Section 5, are incorporated into the facility’s CFI/GI, TCE/instructor-initial, and recurrent training programs, respectively.

b. Procedures for ASIs Who Oversee DPEs. Within 60 days of the effective date of this notice, inspectors will brief each DPE under their supervision of the DPE’s responsibility for ensuring that applicants meet the English language eligibility and proficiency requirements in accordance with Order 8900.2, AC 60-28, part 61, and the PTS. ASIs will notify the DPEs either by phone or email to advise them of this notice.

c. Procedures for FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam) to Inform CFIs. Within 60 days of the effective date of this notice, the FAASTeam will issue a FAAST blast to all CFIs to inform them of their responsibility to identify any applicant for a certificate or rating that does not demonstrate the English language skill standards in accordance with 14 CFR regulations and FAA policy. The FSDO ASI will then take action in accordance with Order 8900.1, Volume 5, Chapter 2, Section 5.

d. Procedures for General Aviation (GA) Pilot Deviation (PD) Investigations. During the conduct of a PD investigation, ASIs will determine if English language proficiency contributed to causing the PD. If the applicant or pilot does not meet the standards per part 61 and AC 60-28, then the ASI will follow the procedures of Order 8900.1, Volume 5, Chapter 2, Section 5, and the current edition of FAA Order 2150.3, FAA Compliance and Enforcement Program.

6. Consequences of Failing to Meet the English Language Proficiency Requirements. Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator, no person may exercise the privileges of an airman certificate issued under part 61, 63, or 65 unless that person meets the English language proficiency requirements of those parts. If a person holding an airman certificate issued under these parts does not meet the English language proficiency requirements, the Administrator will take action to suspend, revoke, or reissue that person’s airman certificate; this action is permitted under Title 49 of the United States Code (49 U.S.C.) § 44709.

7. PTRS. In the Enhanced Flight Standards Automation System (eFSAS), create a new PTRS record by selecting “Add Direct Entry” and use the indicated PTRS activity code. The following PTRS fields must be completed:

a. Appropriate 14 CFR Part.

b. Designator Field.

c. National Use Field. Enter “N8900ENG” (without quotes).

d. Comment Field. The comment field must be completed to document the disposition of action items in paragraph 5. Use the PTRS Activity Code, keyword, and opinion code as follows:

(1) TCPMs with Oversight of Part 142 Training Facilities’ GA Activities, and ASIs with Oversight of GA Part 141 and Non-Part 141 Flight Schools.

- PTRS Activity Code: 1953 (Safety Action Item).
- Primary Area—B.
- Keyword—103 (ability/proficiency).
- Opinion Code—I or U as appropriate.

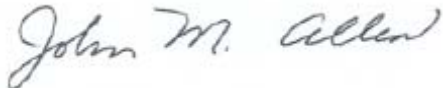
(2) ASIs with DPE Oversight.

- PTRS Activity Code: 1981 (Aviation Education Action).
- Primary Area—B.
- Keyword—199 (other/remarks).
- Opinion Code—I or U as appropriate.

(3) ASIs GA PD Investigation. ASIs will include the following in the PD PTRS investigation comment section:

- PTRS Activity Code: Appropriate Investigation PTRS code.
- Primary Area—B.
- Keyword—103 (ability/proficiency).
- Opinion Code—I or U as appropriate.
- Comment to include, if English proficiency contributory, “English proficiency contributory, and action taken with consideration of N8900.ENG.”

8. Disposition. The FAA will incorporate the following into Order 8900.1, Volume 5, Chapter 2, Section 5: that if an applicant or pilot does not meet the standards per AC 60-28 and FAA policy in accordance with Order 8900.1, the ASI will proceed in accordance with Order 2150.3. Direct questions concerning the information in this notice to the General Aviation and Commercial Division (AFS-800) at 202-385-9602.



John M. Allen
Director, Flight Standards Service