



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Requirements for the Acceptance of Licenses Issued by or on Behalf of Third Countries

The issue:

For years, the European national civil aviation authorities have worked to harmonize the existing patchwork of national aviation regulations into a single standard for all signatory nations under the European Union. This work has come under the auspices of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). The Agency develops common safety and environmental rules at the European level. It monitors the implementation of standards through inspections in the Member States and provides the necessary technical expertise, training and research. The Agency works hand in hand with the national authorities who continue to carry out many operational tasks, such as certification of individual aircraft or licensing of pilots.

In 2008, EASA undertook revisions to flight crew licensing with one goal of EASA's proposal to create EU-wide licenses. This supersedes how each nation deals with the conversion of a U.S. ticket. If the proposed rules take effect as proposed, to convert a "third country (FAA)" pilots license all pilots will have to take EASA's Air Law and Human Performance exams, hold a Class 2 medical certificate, demonstrate language proficiency, fulfill the relevant requirements for the issuance of a type or class rating relevant to the privileges to the license held, have at least 100 hours of PIC time in the relevant aircraft, and pass the PPL skill test. But more importantly, the decision would render worthless the FAA Instrument Rating and could severely impact the value of N-registered aircraft. If they are adopted, the plans will force thousands of pilots to undertake new training courses costing millions of dollars and slide the already-depressed used aircraft market even further.

The importance to our members:

EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency) proposal would make it harder to gain European recognition for pilot certificates earned in the United States. The proposal would require the equivalent of re-certification for the private pilot certificate. If passed into law, the proposal would adversely affect U.S. flight schools that train foreign pilots as well as pilots coming to the United States for training. Absent a bilateral agreement with the FAA, pilots that complete their flight training in the United States will be required to repeat most of the exact same training upon returning to an EU state. US aircraft manufactures and flight training schools will suffer from a down turn in business from Europe as it is unlikely anyone will invest getting a US aircraft or license which lasts for one/two years.

AOPA position:

AOPA believes that United States and European licenses should be converted or validated in either direction with a minimum of additional requirements. Both United States and European pilots have comparable safety records and, though training philosophies somewhat differ, the end product remains essentially the same. In the absence of an approved bilateral agreement between the FAA and EASA, AOPA encourages the EASA to eliminate the additional training requirements and continue to allow each of the European Union countries to recognize the training received in obtaining US airmen certificates as compatible to that needed to obtain a European national certificate.

Status:

- EASA launched a public consultation on 5 June 2008 on the draft Implementing Rules for Pilot Licensing. The consultation process came to an end on Feb 28, 2009, with 11,000 comments were received.
- In September, 2010 EASA will provided the European Commission with its final opinion. This document will constitute the basis for the implementing rules on Flight Crew Licensing to be adopted at the Community level.
- EU Commission is scheduled to vote on the matter October 13 & 14, 2010.