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NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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No Place like Home for Offutt 55th Wing

By Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D.



In 1944, the first B-29 built at Offutt's Martin Bomber Production Plants rolled off the assembly line. (Courtesy Library of Congress.)

In 1940, the U.S. Army Air Corps picked Offutt Field for the new Glenn L. Martin Company Bomber Production Plant. The new plant included construction of a two-mile-long concrete runway, six large hangars, and a 1,700,000-square-foot aircraft-assembly building. In January 1942, bomber construction began. Initially, medium range B-26s rolled off the assembly line. In all 1,585 Marauders were built. In 1944, production switched to the B-29 Superfortress. The heavy bombers included the Enola Gay and Bockscar, which dropped the Fat Man nuclear weapons on Japan's Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Pilot Paul Tibbets personally selected the Enola Gay from the assembly line. On September 8, 1945, B-29 production ended.

With the manufacturing plant's closure, the U.S.A.F. assumed operations over these 80 years on that runway. After all those years of continuous use, the rebuilding of the runway was finally completed recently. On September 30, 2022, the first landings in 18 months, since the complete reconstruction of the

base's single runway and nearby apron, Colonel Kristen Thompson, the 55th Wing commander and General Mark Kelley, Commander of Air Combat Command were the first of eight RC-135 Reconnaissance Variant Jets to land to cheers from the large crowd assembled for this special event.

The investment in national security cost around \$200 million to replace the dangerous runway and neighboring apron and to renovate temporary office and hangar space at the Lincoln Airport during the long months of construction. Several years ago, Senator Deb Fischer had U.S.A.F. engineers inspect and rate Offutt's runway. They reported it as the worst in the Air Force's Combat



Over 80 years ago, the two-mile Offutt runway was built as part of the new Martin Bomber Production Plant. (Courtesy Library of Congress.)



First landing on the totally rebuilt Offutt U.S.A.F. runway on September 30, 2022 by Colonel Kristen Thompson, the 55th Wing commander. (USAF/Charles Haymond photographer.)

Command. After completion of design work, full rebuild of the runway got the “green light” in 2019.

At the ceremony celebrating the runway rebuild and return home of the 55th Wing, U.S. House Representative, Don Bacon, former 55th Wing commander, said, “Today we just went from having the oldest and worst runway in the Air Force, to the newest and the best.” Just as Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz said to Auntie Em, “there is no place like home.” To our Offutt airmen and their families, welcome home. ■

Understanding Airman Medical Standards

AOPA Foundation

Medical regulations list the following 15 medical conditions as specifically disqualifying. If you report having any of them on your medical application, your Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) cannot issue a medical certificate until it is cleared by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) under what’s known as a special issuance authorization.

- Diabetes mellitus requiring oral hypoglycemic medication or insulin
- Angina pectoris
- Coronary heart disease that has been treated or, if untreated, that has been symptomatic or clinically significant
- Myocardial infarction
- Cardiac valve replacement
- Permanent cardiac pacemaker
- Heart replacement
- Psychosis
- Bipolar disorder
- Personality disorder that is severe enough to have repeatedly manifested itself by overt acts
- Substance dependence (including alcohol)
- Substance abuse
- Epilepsy
- Disturbance of consciousness and without satisfactory explanation of cause
- Transient loss of control of nervous system function(s) without satisfactory explanation of cause

A special issuance is a two-sided coin. It’s great that the regulations offer a mechanism to offset the disqualifying conditions. The downside is that it’s a discretionary issuance granted by the Federal Air Surgeon and comes with requirements for periodic interim medical reports and time limitations (usually 12 months) on the duration of the certificate, and it can be withdrawn anytime the FAA sees evidence of an “adverse” change in your condition.

You may hold a certificate that appears to be valid for up to 60 calendar months in accordance with FAR 61.23. In reality, though, the certificate is valid for only as long as the authorization is in force, and that’s determined by the type of medical condition and the perceived risk of incapacitation that could result from the condition.

In addition to the time limitation, reissuance of the certificate will be based on additional testing that must be submitted to the FAA prior to the expiration date of the authorization. This might be a simple status report from your treating physician or a complete reexamination with comprehensive (and expensive) diagnostic testing. Additional limitations may be placed on the operational privileges of the certificate, such as limiting a second-class medical holder to carrying passengers for hire only when part of a qualified two-pilot crew.

The waiver becomes part of your medical certificate and shows that, although you don’t necessarily meet the minimum standards to hold a medical certificate, you have satisfied the FAA that you can safely exercise the privileges of the certificate(s) you hold.

The process can be frustrating and time consuming. The hassles notwithstanding, more than 30,000 pilots have been certified under special issuance. ■

Why Nebraska Airports Are Some Of The Safest In The Country



I'm sure you all know that there are many ways that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulates all airports to ensure they're safe for users. Airports that serve commercial air carriers are required to maintain an operating certificate that is regulated by FAR Part 139. FAR Part 77 specifies the height of buildings, trees, and other objects that determines whether they are an obstruction or a hazard to air navigation. And the FAA requires that all public use airports be inspected on a regular basis so that their condition can be listed in the Airport Master Record. But beyond all this, Nebraska goes an extra step that most other states don't in looking out for the safety of our pilots.

The number one purpose of the Nebraska State Aeronautics Act, originally passed in 1945, "is to further the public interest and aeronautical progress by (1) providing for the protection and promotion of safety in aeronautics. . ." This is the law that created the Department of Aeronautics and was later changed to bring Aeronautics under the newly created Department of Transportation. As a method to codify this requirement, Aeronautics has created Title 17 of the Nebraska Administrative Code which sets the regulations under which we operate. Chapter 1 of Title 17 is called "Rules and Regulations Concerning Public Use Airport/Heliport Licensing."

Chapter 1 requires that all public-use airports in Nebraska must obtain a license from Aeronautics every three years or less. In order to obtain this license airports must meet the published Minimum Standards for Public Use Airports. These standards are similar to FAA requirements but vary to some degree and are also a bit more stringent. The minimum standards can be found in Nebraska Administrative Code Title 17 Chapter 1.003.02 or at this link: https://www.nebraska.gov/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Transportation_Dept_of/Title-17/Chapter-01.pdf

Most states don't have independent licensing requirements such as Nebraska, so this should give you a level of comfort. But these Nebraska regulations also give airports additional work to do to keep their licenses. The most common issues that we've seen in maintaining Nebraska airport licenses is in keeping obstructions and hazards away from airports. Trees are the most common. Remember that trees grow, so even if you've trimmed trees you'll probably need to trim them again in a few years. The very best solution is to remove trees. Allowing crops to grow too close to a runway or leaving hay bales too near runways are also common issues.

The team at Aeronautics who conduct these inspections are smart and very willing to help. Safety is our number one priority and we're proud of the work we do to keep Nebraska's airports safe! Please reach out to us if we can help at (402) 471-2371. ■



AOPA, COPA Call For Canadian Basicmed Acceptance

AOPA Magazine October 2022

In a letter sent to Acting FAA Administrator Billy Nolen and Canada's Minister of Transport Omar Alghabra, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) President Mark Baker and James Ferrier, interim president and CEO of the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association (COPA), requested that pilots from the United States be able to enter Canadian airspace while flying under BasicMed privileges.

Baker and Ferrier noted that more than 75,000 pilots in the United States have qualified to fly under BasicMed in its five years of existence, and a 2021 FAA study did not detect a statistically significant difference in aviation safety outcomes, such as accident rates, between BasicMed pilots and pilots holding third-class medical certificates.

The letter also stated that Mexico, the Bahamas, and the Dominican Republic have welcomed U.S. pilots flying under BasicMed privileges for several years.

"Canada is a high destination country for U.S. pilots, and we are pleased to be working with our colleagues at COPA on this issue. Having Transport Canada accept U.S. pilots using this program is the right thing to do. It's proven to be safe and the program has the support of the Federal Aviation Administration and other nations," said Baker.

The letter also cited the positive economic impact of allowing pilots under BasicMed to fly into Canada. "The increase in General Aviation (GA) traffic and pilots into Canada would undoubtedly help businesses rebuild, provide opportunities for families to see one another, and allow

tourism to again flourish with tens of thousands of border crossings by GA pilots each year," the letter stated.

"COPA is excited to collaborate with AOPA and Transport Canada to explore the acceptance of BasicMed in Canada for U.S. pilots. Incorporating the support of AOPA and building on the success of BasicMed in other countries, COPA is eager to examine the possibilities with [Transport Canada] to introduce a similar process in Canada for our Canadian pilots," said Ferrier.

A similar letter was sent in 2021 by AOPA and COPA to the minister of transport, urging Canada to join the rest of the North American continent in allowing BasicMed operations. That request was seemingly delayed due to the emphasis on addressing COVID-related issues.

The current letter added, "Authorizing U.S. GA pilots with BasicMed privileges to safely fly in Canada's airspace...will help reduce the burden and backlog for Transport Canada's medical evaluations process that are not only impacting GA pilots but commercial pilots as well."

Officials were reminded that Canada remains one of the most popular international destinations for U.S. GA pilots, representing nearly 30 percent of all international GA flights each year.

The Canadian government recently relaxed overall COVID-19 cross-border travel restrictions for those entering Canada by air, land, or sea. ■

Holding Pattern Considerations

By David Morris

Pilots are cautioned that multiple holding patterns may be established at the same fix. These holding patterns may differ in respect to turn directions and leg lengths depending on their application as an enroute holding pattern, a holding pattern charted on a Standard Instrument Departure (SID) or Standard Terminal Arrival Route (STAR), or when used on an instrument approach procedure. Many Area Navigation (RNAV) systems limit the database coding at a particular fix to a single holding pattern definition. Pilots extracting the holding pattern from the navigation database are responsible for confirming that the holding pattern conforms to the assigned charted holding pattern in terms of turn direction, speed limit, timing, and distance.

Aircraft are expected to enter holding at or below the maximum holding speed established in paragraph 5-3-8j2(a) of the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM). The AIM recommends all fixed-wing aircraft conducting holding should fly at speeds at or above 90 Knots Indicated Airspeed (KIAS) to minimize the influence of wind drift. Advise Air Traffic Control (ATC) immediately if unable to comply with the maximum holding airspeed and request an alternate clearance.

Speeds above the maximum or published holding speed may be necessary due to turbulence, icing, etc. In a non-radar environment, the pilot should advise ATC that they cannot accept the assigned hold and request an alternate clearance if exceeding maximum holding airspeed would result in the aircraft deviating from the predicted pattern or flight path. ■

Commercial Balloon Pilots Now Need 2nd Class Medical Certificate

By David Morris

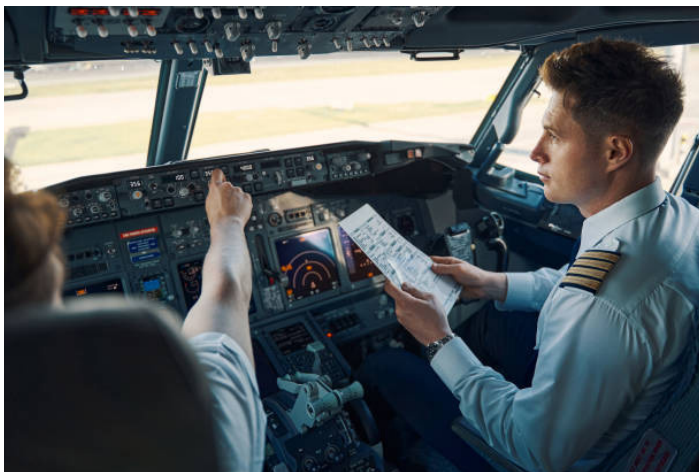
The FAA has adopted a final rule requiring commercial balloon pilots to have a current second class medical to fly passengers. The rule was adopted Wednesday, November 16, 2022, but has been in the works for four years after Congress passed a bill mandating it. "Passengers can now rest assured that commercial balloon pilots must meet the same strict medical requirements as other commercial pilots," said Acting FAA Administrator Billy Nolen in a statement issued Wednesday by the FAA.

The congressional action came after a 2016 balloon crash in Texas killed all 16 aboard. The investigation concluded that the pilot was likely impaired by drugs and had mental health issues. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) also recommended that the FAA adopt a medical requirement for commercial balloons following the tragedy. Before Wednesday, commercial balloon operators were asked to follow a voluntary set of standards established by the Balloon Federation of America. ■

KILLER LIST

Checklists Bury The Crucial Items

AOPA Magazine November 2022



Pilots examine checklists for crucial items also known as 'killer' items.

The checklist for the Beechcraft King Air 350i weighs nearly two and a half pounds. There are 18 "final" items on the before-takeoff checklist. And that's after you've been challenged and responded to 22 items on the "before taxi," and another 20 items on the "before takeoff" list. That's crazy.

Among the uncritical time wasters on the "final" list is making sure the blowers for cabin and cockpit heating/cooling are adjusted, and the interior lights are as required. Same for checking the cockpit door and the generator load.

Buried in that interminable list of 60 items to check from taxi to taking the runway are what the old-timers called the "killer" items. Those are the misadjusted or overlooked switches or controls that can finish you off in the first couple minutes of attempted flight.

On any list of killer items are flap position and pitch trim. On larger turbine airplanes the list also includes checking the position of the spoilers. Those have earned their position on the killer list, because with improperly set flaps or trim, many airplanes simply won't fly. There have been tragic accidents caused by those overlooked items.

To be sure, the heavyweight checklist I fly with includes the killer items. But checking the killers has no bold typeface or color change. They're simply stuck on the list after checking the transponder and before putting the bleed air on low or auto.

Transponder operation is important, but nobody dies because they failed to set the proper code or transponder mode before takeoff roll. Same for bleed air switch position or generator load, which share equal billing on the list with the real killer items.

More than 30 years ago the FAA recognized that there are killer items, and that they are so important there must be a backup for the checklist. That's why airplanes in the transport category, which includes all business jets except the light category, must have a takeoff warning system.

The warning system monitors pitch trim and flap position, the parking brake, and control lock. Incorrect setting of each of those items has been responsible for fatal accidents over

the years. That's why the takeoff warning system must prevent a takeoff attempt if the monitored items are not correctly set.

I'm not advocating for a complex takeoff warning system to be a certification requirement in all lighter turbine airplanes, but we could accomplish many of those goals by redesigning checklists so we really are checking the small handful of items that would likely prove fatal if not properly set. Look at the checklist that came with your airplane and I'm sure you can identify the real killer items.

On any airplane, pitch trim is critical. Airplanes with trimmable stabilizers typically don't have enough elevator authority to control the airplane if the stabilizer trim is out of takeoff range. Even airplanes with trim tabs that do little to alter elevator authority can create such huge control forces if the tabs are improperly set that the pilot can't overcome the force. Pitch trim earned its spot on the killer list over a long and tragic history of accidents.

Flap position is also universally critical. Larger airplanes won't fly at any expected airspeed without correct takeoff flaps. And in lighter airplanes, too much or too little flaps change takeoff distance and climb performance so much that safety goes out the window.

Some pilots may want prop control lever position on their killer list, and I won't argue. But you do have time on a takeoff roll to look at the prop rpm and abort if it is not as expected.

Pitot heat has earned a spot on the killer list to the point that all turbine airplanes in production now have pitot heat off warnings.

Some airplanes, such as the King Air, have a unique killer item. In that case, it's the throttle lever friction setting. Springs in the system pull the levers back toward idle if no friction is set, and a recent fatal takeoff accident was blamed on the pilot's failure to set the friction and identify that one throttle had pulled itself to idle after rotation.

The key for each of us is to wade through the bloat that has swamped business aviation turbine airplane checklists, identify what can finish us off in the first couple minutes, and make that our real final before takeoff checklist and mantra.

There will be plenty of time to fiddle with the air conditioning after the airplane is safely away from the ground and under control. ■



Nebraska's State-owned Beechcraft King Air C90GTx

New Fremont Airport Terminal Celebrated at Ribbon Cutting

By Tammy Real-McKeighan, Fremont Tribune



Pictured during the October 19th ribbon cutting for the new Fremont Municipal Airport terminal building, l to r: Ann Richart, NDOT's Aeronautics Division Director; Fremont Mayor Joey Spellerberg; Fremont Aviation President Jim Kjeldgaard; former Fremont Mayor Scott Getzschman; Robert Steenblock, president, Steenblock Construction; Tara Lea, Executive Director of the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce; and Nick Verba, Chairman of the Chamber Board of Directors.

Photo courtesy of the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce

About 60 people attended the October 19th ribbon cutting for the new Fremont Municipal Airport terminal facility, which includes a conference room, front area, and pilots' lounge. The facility will have three offices available to be rented out.

Ann Richart, Aeronautics Director at the Nebraska Department of Transportation, commended Fremont for recognizing the value of its airport. She pointed to the economic impact airports have on Nebraska communities.

"An airport isn't a transportation facility, it's an economic development tool," Richart said. "You've proven that you understand that, and you get what it takes – and the commitment—to bring this economic vitality to your community."

"It's a beautiful building," said Fremont Aviation President Jim Kjeldgaard, who has worked at the airport for more than 50 years. "It's a great addition to the Fremont airport."

In remarks after the ribbon cutting, Fremont Mayor Joey Spellerberg spoke about the airport's growth potential. "With Fremont and our location to Omaha, we are receiving a lot of traffic that would normally fly into Omaha," he said.

Economic Vitality

Spellerberg also pointed to a study by the Nebraska Aviation Counts! Team, which indicates that Fremont's airport generates \$10.5 million in goods and services from

airport-related activities and supports more than 90 jobs related to these activities. The payroll from these jobs totals more than \$2.6 million.

"It is a part of the critical infrastructure for any community – just as important as a highway system, as rail lines," Spellerberg said. "Your airport represents the economic growth and vitality for Fremont into the future."

Former Fremont Mayor Scott Getzschman also spoke of the airport's economic impact.

"Truly, the airport is the economic driver for the City of Fremont and it's one of the main tools we have in our tool bag for continued growth," Getzschman said. "For many, it's the first impression Fremont makes to businesses visiting Fremont."

The new terminal was constructed next to a new parking apron, which cost more than \$2 million. Spellerberg noted that the apron project was 90% funded by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Future Plans

Speaking of future plans, Spellerberg noted, "Now that we have the terminal, as well as the apron completed, we need the new Fixed Base Operator (FBO) facility."

Kjeldgaard, the fixed base operator, and his maintenance team would use the FBO hangar for maintenance. It also would be used to house larger aircraft that fly into the airport. Spellerberg said the airport advisory board is working on raising money privately for this FBO hangar, with an estimated cost of \$1.6 million in 2020.

In the meantime, Spellerberg is enthusiastic about the new terminal.

"The new terminal building is quite an addition to the community and all of our community should be very proud of the work that was done for over a decade by so many people—by the prior mayor and city council and the airport advisory board," Spellerberg said.

The city-owned airport on the west end of Fremont provides various services, from fuel and aircraft maintenance to flight instruction to sight-seeing tours and transportation for survey-takers. It offers aircraft rental.

More than 50 aircraft – from a two-seater airplane to a 10-seat jet – are based at the airport, which has about 30 city-owned hangars along with privately owned ones. ■

Article reprinted with permission of Fremont Tribune

When Opportunity Knocks, We Need to Say Thank You

By Scott Vlasek, UNO Aviation Institute



Members of the University of Nebraska at Omaha Flight Team, had the opportunity to fly a Boeing 747-200 Level D Simulator.

Opportunity, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is “a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something.” On October 28, 2022, members of the University of Nebraska at Omaha Flight Team, The Flying Mavs, had a unique opportunity when fourteen team members got to fly a Boeing 747-200 Level D Simulator. The device is run by CymSTAR, a contractor for the military that provides training to US Air Force pilots who fly the Boeing E4B.

The E4B can be seen flying around the Omaha metropolitan area, especially now that the Offutt Air Force Base runway has reopened after an extensive reconstruction. While some people may mistake the E4B for Air Force One, the livery or paint job is noticeably different, and so is the mission of the aircraft. But it did not matter to the 14 UNO students, they were flying a simulator more sophisticated than anything they had ever flown for an aircraft few pilots ever get the opportunity to fly.

CymSTAR staff members also had the opportunity to showcase the training they provide and share stories about their time in the US Air Force as pilots, maintainers, or support crew for this amazing aircraft.

Every student was excited and, as aspiring aviation professionals, they all thought they would do well in the simulator. The basic stick and rudder skills are all the same as propeller-driven aircraft they train in as part of the UNO professional flight program. Notably, the E4B has four jet engines, which propel the massive aircraft to speeds several times faster than training aircraft. The E4B’s flight deck is three stories above the ground and the aircraft’s massive weight is carried on landing gear nearly the size of the single engine aircraft used in training. And let’s not forget the E4B can refuel in the air. The differences are substantial, but the students were up to the challenge.

Four groups of students entered the simulator at the same time. One by one, they would take their turns. Each pilot took off from Offutt AFB in Bellevue, Nebraska, which was easy enough. They were then challenged to land the aircraft below minimums at night or to accomplish a mid-air refueling.

One group of students got a special opportunity. This group of three students was joined by Lt. Col. Lowell Bailey (USAF Retired), who is known around the Aviation Institute, where he serves as a Lecturer and Flight Training Coordinator, as Skip.

It didn’t take long for Skip to settle into familiar surroundings. He instinctively knew every button and every setting as he helped student David Wellnitz set up the plane for landing, which David executed flawlessly. For the student, the E4B simulator session was likely a once in a lifetime opportunity. For Skip, it was a homecoming. He was among old friends in an aircraft he had flown around the world, carrying numerous distinguished military and government officials including former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, who is a proud graduate of the UNO Division of Continuing Studies. Now Skip shares his knowledge and stories with students at the Aviation Institute, and those on Flight Team tend to hear even more stories while at dinner or sitting around waiting for a Cessna 150 to return from a Navigation session.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha Aviation Institute is fortunate to have two faculty members who are distinguished veterans. In addition to Lt. Col. Bailey, Commander Eric Taylor (USN, Retired) graduated from the Naval Academy and flew helicopters. Over the years, the Institute has had several retired military officers as faculty members, including Denny Acheson, Jim Crehan, Patrick O’Neil, and David Byers. Each of them, and others who have served as adjunct instructors, made significant positive impacts on our program and our students.

Veterans Day is a day for us to honor and thank the men and women who have served in the military and protected our freedoms. It is also a time to thank veterans, like Skip and Eric, who are giving back and inspiring the next generation of aviation professionals. Their experience and expertise is invaluable. Their passion and commitment for our students is incredible. So, on this Veteran’s Day, we want to thank all those who have served, but especially those who work tirelessly to give young people the opportunity to grow into the aviation professionals our country so desperately needs. ■



Lt. Col. Lowell Bailey (USAF Retired), known as Skip, helps student David Wellnitz during the E4B Simulation session.

Aviation Quiz

1. As you pre-flight your airplane for a flight with friends, you learn that one of them has a small amount of medical marijuana in his bag. He shows you a medical marijuana card issued by the state you're located in, and since the flight will be conducted within the state, it's O.K. if he brings everything in his bag on the flight.

____ True ____ False

2. After landing, taxiing to the ramp, and shutting down your aircraft, you are approached by the local sheriff who demands to see your FAA medical certificate. Are you required to show it to him?

____ Yes ____ No

3. When an aircraft owner sells his aircraft, he doesn't give the buyer any maintenance records concerning the current status of airworthiness directives applicable to the aircraft. Has the seller violated the Federal Aviation Regulations?

____ Yes ____ No

4. If you have an issue with your airman medical certification and your Aviation Medical Examiner is not able to answer your question, the FAA's Aerospace Medical Certification Division in Oklahoma City is the only FAA office that can assist you.

____ True ____ False

5. If you hold an FAA medical certificate and the FAA becomes concerned that you may be taking a disqualifying medication, you can be required to provide your prescription records for the FAA's review.

____ True ____ False

6. If you change the N-number on your aircraft, you'll need a revised airworthiness certificate for the aircraft.

____ True ____ False

7. The curve on top of an airplane wing helps to do what?

8. To act as pilot in command of an aircraft under IFR, what is the minimum instrument flight experience you must have logged during the preceding six months, in the same category of aircraft?

9. A pilot is making an ILS approach and is past the OM to a runway which has a VASI. What action is appropriate if an electronic glide slope malfunction occurs and the pilot has the VASI in sight?

10. In what localities is advection fog most likely to occur?

11. Fog that usually occurs in the winter, aided by clear skies and calm conditions along with the cooling of land overnight by thermal radiation that cools the air close to the surface; this fog usually dissipates soon after sunrise as the ground warms with the exception of high elevation areas where the sun has little influence in heating the surface.

This is the description of what type of fog? ■

1. Answer: False. Ref to Federal Aviation Regulation 91.19
2. Answer: Yes. Ref to Federal Aviation Regulation 61.51.
3. Answer: Yes. Ref to Federal Aviation Regulation 91.419.
4. Answer: False. The FAA has 10 Regional Flight Surgeon offices throughout the United States that you may call or email with your medical certification questions.
5. Answer: True. Ref to Federal Aviation Regulation 67.413.
6. Answer: True. Refer to Federal Aviation Regulation 91.203
7. Answer: Decrease pressure to provide more lift.
8. Answer: Holding procedures, intercepting and tracking courses through the use of navigation systems, and six instrument approaches.
9. Answer: The pilot may continue the approach and use the VASI glide slope in place of the electronic glide slope.
10. Answer: Coastal areas. Advection fog is common where cold ocean currents extend into otherwise warm areas near the coast.
11. Answer: Radiation Fog

Welcome Dennis Schmitt, New BIE Manager

By Tom Winter



Dennis Schmitt, New Beatrice Airport Manager, pictured with Diane Smith.

“Without fuel, pilots are just pedestrians.” – motto of the POL Airmen

Dennis Schmitt grew up in Ord, Nebraska, and regularly biked to Evelyn Sharp Field to enjoy seeing the airplanes. A lifelong aviation fan, Dennis built stick and tissue models, radio control models, and logically joined the Air Force. He did so early enough that the choice of specialties included being a tail gunner on a B-52!

Instead, Dennis got into fueling them. His background will serve him well as the new manager at the Beatrice Municipal Airport (BIE) and serve us well, too: He spent his military career as a POL Airman. POL? you say. That’s for Petroleum, Oil, Lubricants. It’s a specialty that I knew nothing about.

“Besides handling jet fuel, these professionals are also responsible for operating the vehicles, maintaining the equipment and storage facilities that are essential to the refueling operation, and ensuring compliance of all safety regulations while handling these volatile liquids.” To see more on Air Force POL Airmen, search on the web for the story “We Fuel the Flight.” Dennis noted that they had other meanings for the POL acronym.

After the Air Force, Dennis handled line operations and customer service for KCAC Aviation at the Johnson County Executive Airport (KOJC) in Olathe, Kansas, then assisted with marketing for Pilatus, a job with a huge perk: staffing the Pilatus/Piper booths every year at Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Dennis is committed to Diana Smith’s tradition of keeping a welcoming airport, with good presentation. In addition to BIE being a good fit and a good home, an attraction of the job was renewed closeness to family, as Beatrice is hometown for his wife, Shannon. Let’s all welcome him to the eastern Nebraska pilot fraternity. ■



Memento from Dennis Schmitt’s Air Force service.

FAA Adds GPS Routes In Alaska

AvWeb Publication

The FAA is implementing a key component of its Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative with the addition of 54 GPS-guided Terminal Transition Routes (T-Routes), more than half of which will be available this winter. The routes allow direct routing at lower altitudes to allow aircraft to duck icing conditions. A total of 33 will be active by the end of the year. “Pilots use T-routes to navigate along specific points while flying under instrument flight rules (IFR) using approved Global Positioning System (GPS)/Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) equipment,” the agency said in a news release.

Aviation is an integral part of life for many Alaskans, as about 80 percent of communities are only available by air. Atrocious weather at any time of the year also makes it a tricky place to fly, and the safety initiative was launched to help stem the high accident rate. “Flying in Alaska is unlike any other place in the United States,” said Acting FAA Administrator Billy Nolen. “T-routes will provide pilots additional options for completing their missions safely in this uniquely challenging environment.” After the initial implementation, the agency will develop more T-routes to replace Low Frequency/Medium Frequency airways by 2025. ■

Events Calendar

Please check the Aeronautics web page for a list of upcoming aviation events.

York Airport (KJYR)
EAA Chapter 1055 Fly-in breakfast (free-will donation) on the 1st Saturday of the month, 8:00-10:00 a.m

Crete Airport (KCEK)
EAA Chapter 569 Fly-in breakfast (free-will donation) on the 3rd Saturday of every month, 8:00-10:00 a.m

Airport of the Year and Airport Project of the Year

Anyone wishing to nominate a Nebraska airport for “Airport of the Year” please go to www.aero.nebraska.gov and select the link: “Nominate an Airport for Airport of the Year.”

All entries must be received at the NDOT – Division of Aeronautics by January 10, 2023.

Anyone wishing to nominate an “Airport Project of the Year” please contact David Morris at the Division of Aeronautics, phone 402-471-2371. Nominations for this award are also due by January 10, 2023.