

May, 2008

Volume 2, Issue 1

# FAA FIRC Facts

## FAA FIRC Headlines:

- AC 61-83F Completed and Approved.
- Runway Safety: New Required Course.
- Temps No Longer Necessary
- Effective Teaching: Going Beyond the FOI

***“Always teach to the highest level – not the lowest common denominator.”***



FAA AFS-810 Flight Standards Certification and General Aviation Operations  
Gregory French, National FIRC Program Manager

## AC 61-83F Completed and Approved

Welcome to the fourth edition of the quarterly (more or less) *FAA FIRC Facts* newsletter.

Well, as most of you already know by now, Advisory Circular AC 61-83F has made it out the door. I've been putting off this edition of the newsletter until that finally happened and the appendices were prepared for pending final official publication. And, if I may quote Martha Stewart, *"this is a good thing."* They say that even rock will flow if enough heat and pressure is applied.

I also held off until I was sure

about some other things I was working on that I thought you would find interesting and would likely have a direct impact on your operation (discussed elsewhere in this edition)

Now, as far as version F of the AC goes...the division (AFS-800) has already been getting kudos for the change in paradigm that the new Version F is taking in becoming more progressive, offering more freedom to the providers (you!) to do what you know best how to do, and to focus on today's dynamic safety-related issues in aviation.

We've already had a number of providers offer up completely new and revised TCOs well in advance of their approval expiration dates so that they can begin incorporating new materials right away. This is great, and we would encourage all of you to do so. But we want everyone to understand that this is, in no way, required. In fact, you don't have to do anything at all until your approval expires. Remember too, for those of you wishing to change your TCOs incrementally, one module at a time, that can be arranged also. Just contact us and we'll discuss it.

## Runway Safety By Mike Lenz, AFS-800

Runway safety is a new required topic and actually provides a great opportunity for teachable moments for instructors. The one-on-one nature of flight instruction provides an opportunity that rarely exists in the runway safety world. CFIs, can target the airport surface safety portion of their lessons to the types of flying and category of towered airports that the student or pilot frequents.

For example, how carefully does a CFI really look over the logbook of a pilot who is looking for flight review? A CFI may find the pilot's logbook is almost exclusively full of entries with flights to non-towered airports. The pilot says he just doesn't have occasion to go anywhere except those type of airports. No doubt, one day that pilot will find a

reason to land at a towered airport and some basics might be appropriate. These can include how to acquire airport taxi diagrams, the importance of reviewing the diagram for familiarity before flying to the airport and the importance of using the airport diagram to confirm taxi routes and the location of runways. Hold short instructions, "implied" runway crossings when no restriction has been given, and insuring proper runway use when multiple or intersecting runways are in use provide good lessons.

CFIs should ask the pilot where he or she would likely go as their next towered airport. CFIs can show the pilot the airport diagram for that airport and ask them questions about the proper

frequencies, hold short positions and locations on the airport where fuel would be available, etc.

Instructors should give the pilot a few simulated ATC instructions and have them show you where that instruction authorizes them to go.

CFIs need to be aware of the wealth of information available at: <http://www.faa.gov/runwaysafety/>. You can download some of the basic documents and provide them to your FIRC attendees. Show them how to acquire the documents themselves. Share with them the listings of other products. Encourage them to share this information with their own students. Their actions will speak louder than their words, and students, seeing their instructors making use of the products on the web, may just take a closer look for themselves.

## Temps Not Necessary



*“Teaching is fundamentally a “people skill” and many instructors have never fully developed this potential...”*

By now you should all have had a chance to see the new memo dated March 28, 2008. That memo is a clarification of already-existing guidance and can be found on the FIRC web site at: <http://www.faa.gov/pilots/training/FIRC>.

What it tells you is that if your operation employs an ACR, you do NOT need to issue to the airman, nor submit to the FAA, a temporary airman certificate for a CFI renewal. Gone is the terrible tedium of typing the temps. (It’s highly recommended that you place on your graduation certificate something to the effect of “...this certificate is valid for a

period of 3 calendar months from date of issuance...” or the like.)

What this also means is that if you’ve been using the old ACRA program (as opposed to the newer IACRA), you can toss it! Remember, the FAA stopped supporting ACRA years ago. Still, we know that many of you have continued to use it for printing the temps. Well, since temps are no longer necessary, neither is ACRA. Come on folks – let it go!

Oh, and by the way, if you’re determined to keep using ACRA, special paper is no longer necessary. AFS-760 will accept

ordinary bond paper. You do not need to get it pre-approved. Finally, for those of you who are still sending your ACR-signed applications to your FSDOs, you don’t have to. You can send them directly to AFS-760 without the FSDO “middle-man.” AFS-760 has approved this.

There is one little exception. That is, if the FSDO, for some reason, *wants* to see the applications and forward them to AFS-760, then, by all means, give them to your FSDO. However, be sure to include a copy of that memo to be sure the FSDO understands why there are no temps in the package.

## Effective Teaching: Going Beyond the FOI

One of the required core topics in the newly revised AC Version F is titled: Effective Teaching. Note that this is not titled *Fundamentals of Instruction* or the like. There’s a reason. We know that flight instructors are highly trained individuals who hold vast amounts of technical knowledge. This is critical to being a good instructor. But, knowing how to transfer that knowledge and experience to the student is another thing altogether. That’s what we’re striving to cover in this module.

Teaching is fundamentally a “people skill” and many instructors have never fully developed this potential. Let me tell you a couple of stories (short ones, I promise).

A few (I don’t care to think about how many) years ago when I was a brand new instructor, I decided that I would begin showing up at the little flight school where I started instructing wearing a tie. Now, the other instructors all wore shorts, some in T-shirts, etc. Not really “slobs,” but pretty relaxed. Inside of a couple of weeks my schedule was packed, and the other, much more experienced instructors couldn’t figure out why. Here I was, with

almost no hours dual given, and my schedule’s maxed out! Why? Because the “buying public” perceived me as a “professional,” even though I was still soaking wet behind the ears (of course they didn’t know that – and I didn’t tell them!). Did that make me a more effective instructor? You bet it did! Because, since I was perceived as more professional, they took what I said more seriously and listened more carefully, figuring that I must know what I’m talking about.

I’ve attended many FIRCs over the years and one instructor (I don’t remember where) made a comment that really stuck with me. He put on a baseball cap backwards and said “this instructor gets paid \$25 per hour,” then turned the cap forward and said “now this one gets paid \$45 per hour. What’s the difference?” Good question. The answer is: *perception*. How an instructor presents themselves will have a direct influence on how effectively they will be able to transfer their knowledge. This is not to say that all flight instructors should wear ties. It says that *how* they present can be as important as *what* they present because if they’re not taken seriously, then they’re not going to

be effective teachers. There are many other factors to consider when *teaching* “Effective Teaching” to CFIs. Has the instructor learned how to detect boredom in their students and how to deal with it? How about their own boredom? How do they relate to the frustrated student? What skills are necessary to ensure discouraged students regain their confidence and continue on? How does the young hotshot CFI with all of 300 hours under his/her belt communicate with the week-end pilot who happens to own a multi-million dollar corporation?

There are many facets to making an instructor an *effective* instructor. And that’s what we’re striving for in this module: To go a step beyond the “Fundamentals of Instruction.” They’ve already had that training – they had to in order to get their CFI certificate in the first place. Let’s teach them how to more *effectively* apply those fundamentals. This is your opportunity as FIRC providers to give them this precious knowledge. Let’s do it!

