



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

800 Independence Ave., SW.  
Washington, DC 20591

Attention FIRC Provider:

As you are no doubt aware, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is moving forward with several key initiatives to help improve the quality of pilot education. Logically, the success of these efforts will depend greatly on the flight instructor community. For this reason, the FAA views the existing cadre of FIRC providers as a key element in improving the quality of flight instruction within the general aviation (GA) community.

In an effort to develop policy and training materials that support the flight training community, the FAA encourages all FIRC providers to incorporate three new topics into their existing programs; FAA/Industry Training Standards (FITS), System Safety, and Sport Pilot. While these subjects are not explicitly addressed in *Advisory Circular 61-83E, Nationally Scheduled Federal Aviation Administration Approved Industry - Conducted Flight Instructor Refresher Clinics*, there are core and special emphasis areas under which these topics may be included. For example, FITS could be covered as a discussion item under the *Human Factors, Flight Safety or Recurrency/Transition Training* syllabi. These areas are equally applicable to System Safety, which may also have a place in the *Weather, Controlled Flight Into Terrain*, or the *Fundamentals of Instruction* portions of your program. While Sport Pilot is a new subject area for most of the GA community, *Federal Regulations* could prove an ideal area for covering this emerging topic.

Because these three topic areas are so important to the flight training community, there are numerous resources available to assist you in updating your programs. The first of these is the *Flight Instructor Training Module, Volume 1: FAA/Industry Training Standards*. This document is intended to familiarize flight instructors with the FITS program, including its history, objectives, and future goals. It is also designed to aid instructors in the development of their own FITS-based training curricula.

The second and third resources are both designed to help flight instructors understand and effectively utilize the tenets of System Safety. *Volume 2* provides an introduction to System Safety. It also highlights several practical tools that pilots may use to help identify hazards, assess risk, and address any safety of flight issues before they pose a threat. *Volume 3* of the series takes these principles a step further by guiding instructors through the development of their own unique scenario-based training programs. This will allow them to teach System

Safety not as an *ad hoc* instructional topic, but instead as an integral part of their training activities.

All three of these instructional resources, along with other valuable training materials, may be used when updating your training course outlines (TCO). To download these products, please visit **<http://www.faa.gov/avr/afs/FITS/training.cfm>**.

Last but certainly not least, is the new Sport Pilot program. The FAA is very excited about the new opportunities made possible through the Sport Pilot rule. However, we also realize that in order to be successful, today's flight instructors will need to be educated on the finer points of the Sport Pilot program. The best way to facilitate this is by including Sport Pilot as a subject area in existing FIRC's. There are numerous on-line resources available to aid in the development of training materials. For example, the FAA's Light-Sport Aviation Branch offers a myriad of Sport Pilot resources, and they're only a click away at <http://afs600.faa.gov/AFS610.htm>. The FAA offers additional resources via the General Aviation and Commercial Division website at <http://www.faa.gov/avr/afs/SportPilot/index.cfm>. The Experimental Aircraft Association also has a comprehensive website to help familiarize visitors with Sport Pilot, and it may be accessed at <http://www.sportpilot.org>. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association offers many resources, and they may be found at [http://www.aopa.org/whatsnew/regulatory/sport\\_faq.html](http://www.aopa.org/whatsnew/regulatory/sport_faq.html). FIRC Providers are also encouraged to visit the Sport Aviation Association at <http://www.sportaviation.org/>.

If you wish to take advantage of this new policy, you may do so by simply adding each of these topic areas to your existing program as you deem appropriate. If time allows, you may also add any (or all) of these topics as individual elective items. If you would like to cover these areas in greater depth, the FAA will also allow you to make the following substitutions to your current TCO:

1. FITS may be substituted for any *one* of the following subject areas; *Human Factors, Fundamentals of Instruction, Flight Maneuvers and Procedures, Flight Safety, or Recurrency /Transition Training*.
2. System Safety may be substituted for any *one* of the following subject areas; *Human Factors, Fundamentals of Instruction, Flight Maneuvers and Procedures, Flight Safety, or Recurrency /Transition Training*.
3. Sport Pilot may be substituted for any *one* of the following subject areas; *Practical Test Standards, Federal Regulations, Fundamentals of Instruction, or Recurrency/Transition Training*.

As with all TCO changes, these too will require approval from the FAA's Certification and Flight Training Branch, AFS-840. However, to help streamline this process, you need only

forward the specific TCO changes to AFS-840. In addition, the FAA will allow you to teach using your TCO, with proposed changes, prior to receiving formal approval or until such time as you receive guidance outlining any required changes. Note that all other conditions of your TCO approval, including the 16-hour requirement, will remain in effect.

Finally, the FAA would like to emphasize that while inclusion of the aforementioned subject areas is not mandatory, they do represent significant and ongoing changes within the flight training community. If you currently include any or all of these subjects within your FIRC programs, the FAA applauds your proactive approach. If your syllabus remains silent in these areas, the FAA asks that you consider the potential benefits of introducing these key items to your clientele.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mike Brown, AFS-840, at 202-267-7653.

Sincerely,

John M. Wensel  
Manager, Certification and Flight Training  
Branch

cc:  
AFS-800  
AFS-840  
AFS-610

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