

Civil Aviation Authority



Guidance on cost sharing and introductory flights

Information for PPL, NPPL and LAPL holders flying in the UK

Changes to European air operations and pilot licensing regulations, which have been brought forward in the UK, allow some flights that would otherwise be subject to commercial air transport rules, to be undertaken as if they were non-commercial. The changes apply to non-complex aeroplanes and helicopters, sailplanes and balloons (This means any aeroplane or helicopter that falls below the EASA definition of complex aircraft, which most GA type aeroplanes up to 5700kgs do).

They allow more freedom for PPL, NPPL and LAPL holders around:

- Sharing the costs of flights between private persons
- Introductory flights

Currently the changes only apply within the UK, so before leaving UK airspace pilots should be aware that other European states may not have implemented these changes yet. After August 2016, the changes should apply to EASA aircraft throughout the EU. For non-EASA aircraft the applicability will always be dependent on implementation by individual member states.

Cost sharing by private persons

The maximum number of people who can share the direct costs of a flight has been increased from four to six, including the pilot. Direct costs include fuel, airfield charges and any aircraft rental fee. Any other costs not directly related to the flight, for example the annual cost of keeping, maintaining and operating an aircraft, cannot be shared and no profit can be made.

The requirement for those costs to be shared equally has been removed. How much each individual person pays is not prescribed, but the pilot must pay something.

A flight can now be advertised in advance, but it should be made clear that it is a cost sharing flight, and not commercial air transport under an Air Operator's Certificate (AOC), since it is an offence to advertise the sale of a public or commercial air transport flight without being in possession of an AOC.

This aims to allow cost sharing between friends and colleagues and not to provide an air taxi service to members of the public.

Both EASA and non-EASA aircraft, including those on a permit to fly may be used, although the if the aircraft is being hired for the flight, it must have either a Certificate of Airworthiness or be a type approved permit to fly aircraft which is already permitted to be used for self fly hire within the terms of the relevant exemptions.

Introductory flights

Introductory flights are a new EASA provision designed to allow people to be taken on air experience tours in light aircraft. Provided the following conditions are met, it is not necessary for the pilot to be an instructor or for the flight to be operated under commercial air transport rules. The flight must be performed either via an EASA approved training organisation (ATO) with its principle place of business in the UK, or through an organisation created to promote aerial sport or leisure aviation, on the condition that:

- The aircraft is either owned or dry leased by the organisation;
- Any profit made from the flights are kept within the organisation; and
- If non-members of the organisation are involved, for example members of the public, the flights represent only a marginal activity of the organisation.

EASA and non-EASA aircraft may be used; however they must have a valid Certificate of Airworthiness, or be a type approved permit to fly aircraft which is already allowed to be used for remunerated training and self fly hire within the terms of the relevant exemptions.

We would expect these flights to last around 30 to 90 minutes, although for gliders this may vary depending on the weather. In the case of aeroplanes and helicopters, they must return to the place of departure.

They are not designed, and should not be sold, to replace the traditional trial lesson in which a qualified instructor would typically give a demonstration of the controls and some flight training exercises with the participant handling the aircraft. Flight time as a passenger on an introductory flight will not count as training towards the grant of a pilot's licence.

While holders of private licences may conduct introductory flights, they may not personally receive any payment for doing so.

Definitions

An **organisation created with the aim of promoting aerial sport or leisure aviation** means a non-profit organisation, established under national law for the sole purpose of gathering persons sharing the same interest in general aviation to fly for pleasure or to conduct parachute jumping. The organisation should have aircraft available.

Introductory flight means any flight against remuneration or other valuable consideration consisting of an air tour of short duration, offered by an approved training organisation or an organisation created with the aim of promoting aerial sport or leisure aviation, for the purpose of attracting new trainees or new members.

The term **marginal activity** should be understood as representing a very minor part of the overall activity of an organisation, mainly for the purpose of promoting itself or attracting new students or members. An organisation intending to offer such flights as regular business activity is not considered to meet the condition of marginal activity. Also, flights organised with the sole intent to generate income for the organisation are not considered to be a marginal activity.

Further information

[IN 2014/093](#) contains more detailed information and FAQs.

Queries

Any queries or requests for further guidance should be addressed to GA@caa.co.uk