



February 2025 Edition

The Airman Testing Community Advisory (ATCA) is produced by the General Aviation and Commercial Division, Training and Certification Group, Testing Standards Section (TSS), which is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) office responsible for practical test and airman certification standards, certification testing programs, and supporting reference materials. The intent of this advisory is to provide an additional method of change management communication to our stakeholders and support efforts to ensure training and testing remain correlated for an effective certification process.

Stakeholder Communications

We have an established process for timely responses to stakeholder inquiries and feedback. You are encouraged to submit questions and comments regarding our products and services to afs630comments@faa.gov.

Please email comments related to Practical Test Standards (PTS) and Airman Certification Standards (ACS) to acsptsinquiries@faa.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The latest version of the Testing Standards Section [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document is available.

Standards

Incorporation by Reference (IBR)

The Testing Standards Section publishes updates for the PTS and ACS through a rulemaking process called IBR.

The FAA introduced a new rule, *Airman Certification Standards and Practical Test Standards for Airmen; Incorporation by Reference*, to address airman testing standards. This rule codified 15 ACS and 18 PTS in Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations parts 61, 63, and 65 and aligns applicable knowledge and practical tests. The new rule was published in the Federal Register on April 1, 2024, and went into effect on **May 31, 2024**.

The ACS and PTS listed in the FAA’s new rule have the full force and effect of the regulations. The ACS and PTS rule identifies a specific testing standard associated with each certificate, rating, or proficiency check, eliminating ambiguity about which standard must be used. The FAA also published [FAA-G-ACS-2, Airman Certification Standards Companion Guide for Pilots](#), and associated documents, which are available online.

The final rule and associated documents can be viewed at this link: [Federal Register: Airman Certification Standards and Practical Test Standards for Airmen; Incorporation by Reference](#).

ACS Companion Guides

The [ACS Companion Guide for Pilots](#) was updated with Change 2 on December 26, 2024, to remove an errant code (CA.IV.B.S5) from “Commercial Pilot for Airplane Category ACS Archived Codes” subsection of Section 8.

ACS Tips for Evaluators

In early **October 2024**, the ‘ACS Tips for Evaluators’ link was removed from the [Airman Certification Standards Webpage](#) as the checklist contained outdated and duplicative information.

ACS References

The FAA plans to remove the *FAA-P-8740-66 (Flying Light Twins Safely, FAA-P-8740-66)* pamphlet from the task reference section of the Private Pilot for Airplane Category ACS; Commercial Pilot for Airplane Category ACS; and the Flight Instructor for Airplane Category ACS during the next ACS revision.

The FAA determined that the information regarding factors affecting V_{MC} in *FAA-P-8740-66* may not be consistent with the multiengine airplane information found in the [Airplane Flying Handbook \(FAA-H-8083-3C\)](#), revised in 2021. The FAA also removed *Flying Light Twins Safely, FAA-P-8740-66 (2008)* from the [FAA Team website](#).

Airmen should reference the multiengine airplane operations information contained in the [Airplane Flying Handbook \(FAA-H-8083-3C\)](#), in preparation of multiengine airplane training and practical tests.

Reference Materials

The Testing Standards Section recently completed revisions to our internal processes for developing, revising, and maintaining reference materials. These process improvements will result in programmatic efficiencies and increased agility in keeping pace with advancements in aviation safety and technologies.

Handbooks

We value and continue to rely upon our established partnerships with the aviation community when collaborating to develop, review, and revise handbook content. As our processes evolve, we will continue to ensure effective communications with our FAA and community partners, including a jointly designed schedule for handbook development and revision.

Balloon Flying Handbook

[FAA-H-8083-11B, Balloon Flying Handbook](#), was posted to faa.gov on **December 26, 2024**. This revision supersedes FAA-H-8083-11A, dated 2008, and incorporates information from the Balloon Flying Handbook Addendum, dated 2016. Following is a summary of the changes:

- Removed/replaced obsolete publications/links.
- Replaced weather references where appropriate (i.e., AC 00-6, AC 00-24, AC 00-30, AC 00-45, AC 00-54, AC 00-57, with FAA-H-8083-28, Aviation Weather Handbook).
- Inserted second-class medical requirement for commercial balloon pilots.
- Inserted FAA WINGS Proficiency Program Information.
- Inserted additional language regarding ground assistance in Chapter 8, Landing & Recovery.
- Corrected student pilot paper certificate information.
- Removed references to Direct User Access Terminal Service (DUATS).
- Edited language to be more diverse, equal, and inclusive.

Glider Flying Handbook

[FAA-H-8083-13B, Glider Flying Handbook](#), was posted to faa.gov on **December 26, 2024**. This revision supersedes FAA-H-8083-13A, dated 2013. Following is a summary of the changes:

- Updated hyperlinks to reflect current URLs.
- Incorporated corrections based on adjudicated feedback from industry stakeholders.
- Corrected graphics and equations as reviewed and recommended by the President of the Philadelphia Glider Council.
- Updated weather-related content to reflect current information.

Airman Knowledge Testing

Airman Knowledge Test Questions (AKTQs) are continuously monitored for accuracy and performance and are rigorously reviewed during regularly scheduled exam board meetings to ensure spelling and grammatical correctness; clarity; consistency in terminology, structure, and formatting; and alignment of content with FAA regulations, testing and certification standards, and reference materials and figures. Although the FAA does not provide sample questions or share active question content with stakeholders, information on new content, content no longer tested, and terminology changes are posted in the ATCA.

Pilot and Mechanic Test Question Format Updates

Questions that contain airport names in reference to a supplement figure will be updated to align with the format of the airport name and identifier in the Sectional Chart. Following is an example:

- **Previous Version:** (Refer to FAA-CT-8080-2H, Figure 78.) You have been contracted to inspect towers located approximately 4 NM southwest of the **Sioux Gateway (SUX) airport** operating an unmanned aircraft. What is the maximum altitude above ground level (AGL) that you are authorized to operate over the top of the towers?
- **Updated Version:** (Refer to FAA-CT-8080-2H, Figure 78.) An RPIC has been contracted to inspect towers located approximately 4 NM southwest of the **SIoux GATEWAY/COL DAY (SUX) airport**

operating an unmanned aircraft. What is the maximum altitude above ground level (AGL) the RPIC is authorized to operate over the top of the towers?

- In keeping with alignment of current industry standards for testing, the AKTQs are being updated with the following formats:
 - The removal of questions that include negative phrases such as, ***“Which of the following is NOT correct?”***.
 - Questions are presented in third person (i.e., replacement of “you” with “the pilot”).
 - Questions solicit a single response vs. the option of choosing “both” or “neither”.

Learning Statement Codes

The current version of the Learning Statement Reference Guide for Airman Knowledge Testing is available at this link: [Learning Statement Codes](#).

ACS Codes

Of the **89** FAA airman knowledge tests offered, **31** now have ACS codes displayed on the corresponding Airman Knowledge Test Reports (AKTR). These tests are indicated by light blue shading of the test code in the [FAA Airman Knowledge Testing Matrix](#).

Matrix

An updated version of the [FAA Airman Knowledge Testing Matrix](#) is available. Following is a description of the changes:

- The time allotted for the Commercial Pilot Helicopter Exam was reduced from 3.0 hours to 2.5 hours.
- The time allotted for the Instrument Rating Helicopter Exam was reduced from 2.5 hours to 2.0 hours.
- The time allotted for the Private Pilot Helicopter Exam was reduced from 2.5 hours to 2.0 hours.

Statistics

Airman Knowledge Tests Statistics

The CY 2024 Airman Knowledge Test Statistics and Test Volume Chart are available at this link: [Airman Knowledge Test Statistics](#).

Frequently Missed Knowledge Test ACS Codes

The Frequently Missed Knowledge Test ACS Codes Report is located under the ‘2024’ tab of the [Airman Knowledge Test Statistics Webpage](#). This report is based on recommendations provided by the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) Airman Certification System (ACS) Call to Action (CtA) Subgroup (SG) and Data Team, and:

- is produced and posted to the [Airman Testing Website](#) on a quarterly basis.
- is based on data contained in the Safety Performance and Analysis System (SPAS), for the specified timeframe.

- includes data for ACS codes administered at least 100 times.
- displays ACS Codes missed more than 70% of the time on specific knowledge tests.