

Over the past year the FAA/Industry Training Standards (FITS) program has grown beyond our expectations. Most of this growth has been driven by industry, not by the FAA or the FITS team. Not only is the aviation industry integrating FITS tenets into its training programs, but the rapid growth of glass cockpits in smaller general aviation airplanes has created a demand to expand FITS training concepts into more industry training programs. Aircraft Training Devices (ATD), what used to be called Personal Computer Aviation Training Devices (PCATD), are improving everyday. Personal computers and the Internet have made distance learning efficient and effective.

When the FITS program started, Cirrus Aircraft Design was the only general aviation aircraft manufacturer offering propeller-driven, single-engine general aviation aircraft with a glass cockpit display (as an option). At that time the Avidyne FlightMax Entegra Integrated Flight Deck was the only system available for this market. Eclipse Aviation was our first jet partner when it proposed to build the first very light jet (VLJ). At that time, the term Technically Advanced Aircraft (TAA) had yet to be coined. Today, the Garmin G1000 system also has been certified for original equipment manufacturers. Now, all the major general aviation aircraft manufacturers either offer a single engine and/or twin-engine aircraft with a glass cockpit. Cessna, Diamond, Mooney, and Beechcraft use the Garmin G-1000. Adam Aircraft, Lancair, and New Piper use the Avidyne Flight Max system. These systems have changed the art and science of operating an airplane.

Piston-powered aircraft are not the only market for glass cockpits. The VLJ market has heated up. Many VLJ manufacturers are also installing these same glass cockpits in their aircraft. Safire (*Safire Jet*), Aviation Technology Group (*Javelin*), and Adam Aircraft (*A700*) are installing Avidyne FlightMax Entegra systems. Cessna plans to install the Garmin G-1000

system in its *Mustang* VLJ.

The FITS team has been working directly with many of these manufacturers (or their chosen training providers) to develop appropriate training programs. Adam, Cirrus, Cessna (its piston line), and Mooney have FITS accepted factory transition training curricula. Cirrus also has a FITS accepted instructor training course. The FITS team is working with Diamond, Lancair, and Aviation Technology Group on their transition training programs. The FITS team just started working with the training branch of United Airlines. United has contracted with Eclipse to provide Eclipse operator initial and recurrent training.

The information on FITS is getting out to other training developers and providers. Middle Tennessee State University (Part 141 Private/Instrument Combined Curriculum), Garmin (GNS 430/530 Training), Aviation Supplies and Academics (Instrument Pilot Trainer and Instrument Refresher: An IPC Simulator), Human Performance Training Institute (HPTI), and 13 piston curricula from AeroTech all have FITS accepted curricula. We have received requests for FITS acceptance from training developers such as, Avionics Training Unlimited, Electronic Flight Solutions, CAP Aviation Consulting Group. We have received request for FITS acceptance from training providers such as Sporty's, Skyline Aeronautics, RWR Pilot Training and Gene Hudson Flight Training. I get phone calls daily from people inquiring about FITS acceptance.

FLIGHT STANDARDS DISTRICT OFFICE INVOLVEMENT

This brings me to some of the things we have been working on for 2005. Our technical team is getting too busy to evaluate every curriculum from a pilot school that requests FITS acceptance. We hope to have guidance this year and FSDO inspectors trained to evaluate a training program and issue FITS acceptance. The FITS team will still work directly with aircraft

and avionics manufacturers and suppliers of training information.

QUESTIONS ON FITS

If you are a flight instructor or designated pilot examiner and have not received any official guidance on FITS, you will very soon. If you renew your Flight Instructor Certificate by attending a Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic (FIRC) you will receive information and guidance on FITS along with two System Safety Course Developers Guides. Internet-based FIRCs must provide a link to these documents by May 2005. You can download this information now by going to <http://www.faa.gov/avr/afs/fits/training.cfm> and download the three volumes. All FIRCs must have a fully developed FITS/System Safety module by September 2005.

DEVELOPING FITS PRODUCTS

The FITS team is developing modules for specific audiences. To answer the question of how to develop a course that is FITS compliant, we are developing a FITS Course Developers guide. To answer the question of how do you teach and evaluate the tenets of FITS, we are developing an Instructor's Guide. We are also developing specific FAA Inspector and Designated Examiner guidance on how FAA Inspectors and Designated Examiners can apply FITS while giving practical tests. We are also developing information on how to transition a pilot from a conventional cockpit to a TAA aircraft. Avionics Training Standards are also being developed.

Most of these guides should be completed and on the FITS web site www.faa.gov/avr/afs/fits by the middle of 2005. All new documents go into the "What's New" web page for about six months or longer.

As you can see, the FITS team has been working hard for the past two years, and we have a lot of work still ahead.

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