

# TOW PILOT TRAINING COURSE - Page 11

## FEDERAL AVIATION REGULATIONS FOR TOW PILOTS

[Text in brackets added by author for explanation]

Sec. 61.69 Glider towing: Experience and training requirements.

(a) No person may act as pilot in command for towing a glider unless that person:

(1) Holds at least a private pilot certificate with a category rating for powered aircraft;

(2) Has logged at least 100 hours of pilot-in-command time in the aircraft category, class, and type, if required, that the pilot is using to tow a glider;

[100 hours in category (airplanes), class (single-engine), and type, a type rating is only required if the tow plane weighs over 12,500 lbs. or is powered by turbojet engines]

(3) Has a logbook endorsement from an authorized instructor who certifies that the person has received ground and flight training in gliders and is proficient in--

[Sounds like an endorsement from a CFGI is needed to verify ground and flight training in gliders]

(i) The techniques and procedures essential to the safe towing of gliders, including airspeed limitations;

(ii) Emergency procedures;

(iii) Signals used; and

(iv) Maximum angles of bank.

(4) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, has logged at least three flights as the sole manipulator of the controls of an aircraft towing a glider or simulating glider-towing flight procedures while accompanied by a pilot who meets the requirements of paragraphs (c) and (d) this section;

[Actual tow pilot flight training/experience can be accomplished by a tow pilot that meets the requirements of paragraph (c) and (d) below.]

(5) Except as provided in paragraph (b) [Paragraph (b) is a grandfather clause] of this section, has received a logbook endorsement from the pilot, described in paragraph (a)(4) of this section, certifying that the person has accomplished at least 3 flights in an aircraft while towing a glider, or while simulating glider-towing flight procedures; and

(6) Within the preceding 12 months has--

(i) Made at least three actual or simulated glider tows while accompanied by a qualified pilot who meets the requirements of this section; or

(ii) Made at least three flights as pilot in command of a glider towed by an aircraft.

[(6) establishes your yearly currency requirements, 3 actual or simulated tows or 3 flights as PIC of a glider being towed within a 12 month period.]

(b) Any person who before May 17, 1967, has made and logged 10 or more flights as pilot in command of an aircraft towing a glider in accordance with a certificate of waiver need not comply with paragraphs (a)(4) and (a)(5) of this section. [Grandfather clause]

(c) The pilot, described in paragraph (a)(4) of this section, who endorses the logbook of a person seeking glider-towing privileges must have:

[This paragraph establishes additional requirements for the tow pilot who rides with the student tow pilot for 3 actual or simulated tows and verifies the experience with an endorsement to the fact.]

(1) Met the requirements of this section prior to endorsing the logbook of the person seeking glider-towing privileges; and

(2) Logged at least 10 flights as pilot in command of an aircraft while towing a glider.

[He/she has to be an FAR legal tow pilot and has a minimum of 10 tows under his/her belt ]

(d) If the pilot described in paragraph (a)(4) of this section holds only a private pilot certificate, then that pilot must have:

[ If only a private pilot, additional requirements are added below. ]

(1) Logged at least 100 hours of pilot-in-command time in airplanes, or 200 hours of pilot-in-command time in a combination of powered and other-than- powered aircraft; and

[So you can have a combination of glider and powered aircraft. What combination? It is not specified.]

[The following is currency requirements for the tow pilot doing the endorsement]

(2) Performed and logged at least three flights within the 12 calendar months preceding the month that pilot accompanies or endorses the logbook of a person seeking glider-towing privileges--

(i) In an aircraft while towing a glider accompanied by another pilot who meets the requirements of this section; or

(ii) As pilot in command of a glider being towed by an aircraft.

[Amdt. 61-102, 62 FR 16298, Apr. 4, 1997; Amdt. 61-103, 62 FR 40901, July 30, 1997]

### **Sec. 91.309 Towing: Gliders.**

(a) No person may operate a civil aircraft towing a glider unless--

(1) The pilot in command of the towing aircraft is qualified under Sec. 61.69 of this chapter;

(2) The towing aircraft is equipped with a tow-hitch of a kind, and installed in a manner, that is approved by the Administrator;

[Check the tow plane's logbook for an entry showing the installation of the tow hitch.]

(3) The tow line used has breaking strength not less than 80 percent of the maximum certificated operating weight of the glider and not more than twice this operating weight. However, the tow line used may have a breaking strength more than twice the maximum certificated operating weight of the glider if--

[The maximum certificated operating weight may be listed in the pilot's operating handbook as the maximum gross takeoff weight.]

(i) A safety link is installed at the point of attachment of the tow line to the glider with a breaking strength not less than 80 percent of the maximum certificated operating weight of the glider and not greater than twice this operating weight.

(ii) A safety link is installed at the point of attachment of the tow line to the towing aircraft with a breaking strength greater, but not more than 25 percent greater, than that of the safety link at the towed glider end of the tow line and not greater than twice the maximum certificated operating weight of the glider;

[This is to ensure the tow rope breaks at the glider end first ]

(4) Before conducting any towing operation within the lateral boundaries of the surface areas of Class B, Class C, Class D, or Class E airspace designated for an airport, or before making each towing flight within such controlled airspace if required by ATC, the pilot in command notifies the control tower. If a control tower does not exist or is not in operation, the pilot in command must notify the FAA flight service station

serving that controlled airspace before conducting any towing operations in that airspace; and

(5) The pilots of the towing aircraft and the glider have agreed upon a general course of action, including takeoff and release signals, airspeeds, and emergency procedures for each pilot.

(b) No pilot of a civil aircraft may intentionally release a tow line, after release of a glider, in a manner that endangers the life or property of another.

[54 FR 34291, Aug. 18, 1989, as amended by Amdt. 91-227, 56 FR 65661, Dec. 17, 1991]

**This finishes the study portion of the course. Proceed to the Test. On the test page select the Tow Pilot Course examination and proceed with the examination.**

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