

What You Can Do Now

While industry and the FAA hold meetings and come up with plans to respond to various types of input and criticism on training, the rest of us are stuck. What can we do to improve our training experience and implement some of the recommendations the agency is likely to adopt?



How can the average pilot get ahead of this curve?

Absent some official guidance, which appears to be the situation in the foreseeable future, there's no reason to wait. Here are some tips designed to reflect what many see as drawbacks to our current training paradigms.

DEVELOP REALISTIC SCENARIOS

Before just showing up for your flight review, IPC or other scheduled training, work with your instructor to create a risk-based experience. He or she should come up with the lesson plan, but it should be structured around a scenario and using a FRAT to identify, assess and mitigate risk.

While doing this training in your airplane is beneficial, don't be afraid to break the mold by throwing in a different airplane/avionics suite, or use a simulator for an aircraft type you don't fly. While many use their recurrent training sessions to work toward a new rating, think first about diving down into the details of the flying you already do.

"PROFESSIONALIZE" YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Well before any FAA-recognized professional standard for instructors is created, there are many things he or she can do to improve their standing among peers. They might also learn something along the way that will help them attract and retain more students.

Actively support your CFI in seeking professional accreditation and encourage him/her to participate in ongoing programs at the local, regional or national levels. Reward him/her by recommending new students.

INTEGRATE YOUR TRAINING

Use the basic techniques being pioneered by Redbird/King Schools/Cessna to leverage all the tools and real-world expertise they are. This approach primarily affects new students, and possibly those pilots seeking additional ratings, but should be considered by all pilots and training organizations.

Although the Redbird "experiment" won't be fully validated for a while, there are many things you can do to implement their concepts while waiting for your training organization to change its ways. If you already have all the ratings, consider being a cheerleader for these concepts. Meanwhile, you still need some recurrent work, don't you?