

# CIVIL AIR REGULATIONS FOR GLIDER PILOTS

## S.S.A. Technical Committee Report to Midwinter Directors' Meeting by Paul F. Bikle, Chairman

A survey of existing Civil Air Regulations governing the certification of glider pilots has been completed in the past six months. Members of the Technical Committee have contacted soaring pilots in different parts of the country to determine their opinions as to the adequacy of the current regulations and the need for changes or additions to these regulations. (The regulations under discussion are Parts 20 and 43 of Civil Air Regulations as amended to Feb. 1, 1952, and may be obtained for 5c each at most aviation supply houses or from Supt. of Documents, Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. When ordering these Parts be sure to also order the amendments since many of them apply to changes in glider regulations. There have been at least twenty amendments to Part 20; seven to Part 43. If enough readers indicate a desire to order copies, SOARING will undertake to mimeograph the ten pages of the amended regulations which apply to gliders. The cost will probably be fifty cents per copy post paid. Anyone purchasing these Parts for study should also purchase Part 60 on traffic rules.) Changes and additions which have been suggested have been summarized and are included with this report.

Bob Stanley first instigated the idea of bringing the Civil Air Regulations up to date in 1947. Partially as a result of his work and the work of other members of the Society, a number of changes have recently been made in the CAR. Some of these were made to conform to the standards of the ICAO. On the whole, the existing regulations are quite reasonable although not very stringent and most suggested changes have been of a nature which would require a higher degree of experience or proficiency to obtain a glider rating. Unfortunately, they also involve greater expense, greater inconvenience, and more red tape for the individuals new to the sport. It never has been possible to arrive at a set of rules which have been completely satisfactory to everyone and it is not likely that such a solution will be found at this time.

Advocates of the more restrictive proposals have used safety as a reason for the changes and have quoted various accidents to show that unqualified pilots have been responsible for a number of serious crashes and injuries. From this, it has been inferred that more stringent regulations would help to prevent such accidents. Further investigation of the accident data reveals that in most cases the accidents involved pilots who had not even complied with the existing regulations with regard to glider ratings or were violating other CAA regulations concerning

weather, minimum altitudes, or reckless flying. There is reason to believe that further regulations would result only in a greater number of violations, not a decrease in the number of accidents. Of interest in this connection is the comment received from the Director, Bureau of Safety Regulations, Civil Aeronautics Board, relative to the changes outlined. His reply to the Committee's request for comments or suggestions relative to these proposed changes was, "The only suggestion I have at this time is for your committee to avoid making your proposals too restrictive and thereby defeat your purpose".

On the whole, it does not appear to be too difficult to obtain a glider rating so far as the regulations are concerned. If the necessary equipment and facilities are available, a novice may obtain a student permit and may solo after from 3 to 8 hours of instruction which must include instruction in recovery from stalls. The instruction may be in gliders or in a combination of gliders and airplanes. A two-place glider is not required. Auto-tow launching facilities are sufficient although the student would probably learn more rapidly from the longer flights resulting from airplane tows. He must take a simple written test and may then solo as soon as he is deemed competent to do so by his instructor. The instructor must be either a rated glider flight instructor or a commercial glider pilot. The novice, having soloed, may continue to fly solo and may engage in all normal types of soaring so long as he does not carry passengers.

The student will be eligible to take a flight examination for a private glider pilot's rating as soon as he has made 100 glider flights or has flown 10 hours in a glider including at least 50 glider flights. At least 25 of these flights shall have included at least one 360° turn. He must also have had at least one hour of flight instruction in either a glider or airplane in the recovery from stalls. The flight test is elementary and may be taken in either a single or two-place glider. A slightly more comprehensive written examination must be passed before he will receive his rating. This includes questions on such portions of Parts 43, 60, and 62 of the CAR as are pertinent to glider operations and of aeronautical charts, meteorology in relation to glider flights, navigation and other instruments used in gliders, theory of flight, and glider operating limits.

A commercial glider rating may be obtained after the pilot has made a total of 250 flights or has acquired a total of 25 hours of glider time including at least 125 glider flights. Included in this time must