

Federal Supervision of Gliders and Glider Pilots

An act "To Create a Civil Aeronautics Authority, and to promote the development and safety and to provide for the regulation of civil aeronautics . . . may be cited as 'The Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938'." It created two federal agencies that supervise all glider flying: one, the Civil Aeronautics Board that promulgates rules and regulations; two, the Civil Aeronautics Administration, that enforces the foregoing. Civil Air Regulations cover certification, identification, and marking of aircraft and related products. Under this heading, type certificates, production certificates, aircraft and product identification and airworthiness certificates are handled. The letter "N," preceding numerals on wing surfaces and tail surfaces denotes United States registration; and is followed by the registration number. Civil Air regulations also apply to pilots; as to age, citizenship, education, physical standards, and aeronautical knowledge, experience and skill.

To supplement the foregoing The Soaring Society of America has a Committee of safe practices whose "duties are . . . to seek out methods of operations and types of equipment that are not considered to be safe and free from accidental injury to personnel or equipment and recommend and insist on changes that will insure accident-free operations." Furthermore, all pilot contestants at national contests are required to have a Federal Pilot Certificate appropriate for the type of glider flown and for the type of flying if other than normal visual-contact flying.

In those states having aeronautical commissions, adherence to such state rules and regulations as exist are also required to be complied with by the "S. S. A."

Based on the phrase, ". . . and to promote the development . . . of civil aeronautics" the Civilian Pilot Training Program, a temporary agency within the Civil Aeronautics Administration authorized an experimental gliding and soaring flight training program, to be started not later than June 20, 1939, and to be completed within three weeks.

The Soaring Society of America and the Frankfort, Michigan School of Soaring were requested to submit bids for the soaring training of twelve pilots who had been graduated from "C. P. T. P." power-plane flight schools. The soaring course included ground school instruction, an airport gliding check-out course and soaring, including all methods of launching gliders. Students upon completion of the course would have earned a private glider pilot certificate and also a "C" soaring certificate, which twenty students accomplished!

The "S. S. A." conducted school at Harris Hill through the courtesy of the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation. The Frankfort School, mentioned above, utilized an airport that had been developed by the citizens of Frankfort. War clouds appearing on the horizon brought about a cessation of this training program which, if continued, might have avoided the costly and sometimes tragic glider training program of the armed forces which was started a "bit too little—a bit too late."



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