

THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS ADMINISTRATION
CIVILIAN PILOT TRAINING PROGRAM

(The C.A.A. Course)

Tau Beta Pi Theme

by

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- Foreword -

This paper will attempt to give, without going into too much detail, a brief but complete explanation of the main features of the organization and conduct of the Civilian Pilot Training Program which is being carried on at the present time by the Civil Aeronautics Administration of the United States Department of Commerce. This program is designed, primarily, to provide a large number of civilians with the necessary flying training to enable them to be available immediately for duty as pilots in the military services of the United States in any time of emergency. The pilot training is being offered at a very minimum of cost to many people, mostly students at colleges and universities, at the present time. This Civilian Pilot Training Program is certainly one of the most important phases of the national defense preparation program and should be of vital interest to nearly everyone.

The C.A.A. Course

With the world in its present state of turmoil, three letters of the alphabet have become nationally known and in a few short months have become letters of great significance. These letters are C.A.A. These three letters have become extremely well known to students of many colleges and other educational institutions all over the nation. The letters themselves stand for Civil Aeronautics Administration. This is a branch of the United States Department of Commerce and is also sometimes called the Civil Aeronautics Authority.

The familiar use noted above of the letters C.A.A. is that in which they are used in the term "C.A.A. Course". This expression refers to the Civilian Pilot Training program which is being carried on by the Civil Aeronautics Authority.

When millions of dollars were made available by Congress for a national defense preparation program, it was immediately deemed advisable, in view of the rising use of the airplane as a major military factor, to devote a portion of these funds to the development of enough well trained pilots to fulfill any future needs of the country for pilots for an expanding air force. As a result, in addition to granting huge sums of money to the Army and Navy to further carry out their aviation training programs, the Civil Aeronautics Administration was ordered to start a civilian pilot training program which is entirely separate from either military service. It is this program of pilot training which is now so commonly referred to as the C.A.A. Course and it is with this program of civilian pilot training that this paper deals.

The first thing which it was necessary to do was to determine

the best means of carrying out this program. It was finally decided to select various colleges, universities, technological institutions, teachers' colleges, and junior colleges which would sponsor this program in co-operation with the government. The Administrator of Civil Aeronautics enters into a contract with these institutions which calls for the ground training of a definite number of students in conjunction with flight training to be given them. The Administrator at the same time enters into a contract with a selected flight instruction contractor for the actual flight training.

Each of the chosen institutions is assigned its own definite quota of students, not to exceed fifty in number, to be trained. The airport where the flight instruction is to be carried on is a selected one which must be within a certain distance of the sponsoring school. If the pilot quota is not filled by students of the institution, the training may be offered to persons not enrolled in the school who are considered qualified for such training. The applicants must be citizens of the United States between the ages of nineteen (19) and twenty-six (26) years of age, and must pass a rigid physical examination given by a Civil Aeronautics Medical Examiner. Those enrolled in the sponsoring institution must meet certain scholastic requirements. Perhaps the most important requirement of all is that the applicants must pledge themselves to apply for further flight training in the military service of the United States.

The flight instruction contractor must also meet certain requirements. These consist mainly of providing an acceptable airport and the required number of planes and qualified pilots for his assigned quota of students.

The training program itself is divided into two main sections; the Private (Preliminary) Course, Collegiate Phase, and the Restricted Commercial (Secondary) Course. Only outstanding students who have successfully completed the Preliminary Course are eligible for the Secondary Course. The completion of the latter course will lead to consideration for further training in the United States military service.

The Preliminary Course is divided into two parts; the seventy-two (72) hour ground course and the thirty-five (35) to fifty (50) hour flight instruction course. The ground course is in turn divided into two parts; the forty-eight (48) hours of classroom instruction in Meteorology and Navigation provided by the sponsoring institution and twenty-four (24) hours of classroom instruction in Aircraft Operation and Civil Air Regulations given by the flight instruction contractor. This has proven very satisfactory since the institution can supply what may be termed the theory and the flight instructor can at the same time integrate those courses which have to do with flight maneuvers and aircraft servicing into the actual flight training of each trainee.

The actual flight training for the Primary course consists of about 21 hours of dual instruction and 14 hours of solo flying. The student is qualified for and is allowed to undertake solo flight after eight (8) hours of dual instruction. The flying is done in a certified aircraft of not less than 50 H.P. These planes, in the case of most of the airports engaged in this program, are the well known sport plane the Piper "Cub", which are light planes with engines ranging from 50 H.P. to 75 H.P. and with an average cruising speed of approximately 70 M.P.H. and top speed of 90 M.P.H. During the Preliminary Course the student pilot takes up and masters such things as taxiing, take-offs, figure-eights,

landings, and other simple maneuvers. When this course is completed the student pilot will receive his Private Pilot Certificate.

The Secondary course is divided into two parts also; the one hundred twenty-six hour ground course, which is to be given jointly by the participating institution and the flight instruction contractor, and a forty to fifty hour flight course which is given by the flight instruction contractor. The contracts entered into and the conduct of this course is so essentially the same as that of the Primary Course that the differences are negligible.

The ground course is quite a bit more thorough than that of the Primary Course, such subjects as Powerplants, Aerodynamics, Aircraft, and Navigation being taken up. The actual flight course is very much more advanced than that of the Preliminary Course. The planes which are used are much more powerful than those of the Primary Course. These planes used for the Secondary Course have up to 225 H.P. and of course are much faster and maneuverable. The type quite frequently used is the Fairchild M-62A which is a low winged sport and training plane with the required tandem seating. The Secondary flight course is a complete review of the Primary course and in addition the student learns and practices all forms of take-offs, stalls, spins, loops, and other maneuvers. The length of the Secondary Course gives the pilots much practice and a great deal of solo flying so that the pilots turned out are exceptionally well trained. At the conclusion of this course the student is given a flight test by a Civil Aeronautics Inspector and if passed will receive his Restricted Commercial Pilot Certificate.

Each student taking either of the courses must have and is provided with complete insurance coverage before the course is started.

This insurance includes public liability and property damage coverage in addition to life insurance and medical payment insurance on the trainee himself.

As for the problem of who will pay for all the training and flying being done, the method of financing is the following. For the Primary Course the sponsoring institution may charge a fee which will not exceed \$10 which does not include the cost of the life insurance or the Civil Aeronautics physical examination. The cost of these last two items must be borne by the trainee. The Administrator of Civil Aeronautics pays the institution \$20 for each trainee who completes the ground course. The flight instruction contractor is paid \$325 for each student who completes the flight training and \$10 for each one who completes the flight contractor's portion of the ground course.

The payments for the Secondary Course are the same except that the sponsoring institution receives \$50 for each trainee completing the ground course and the flight instruction contractor receives \$750 for each trainee who completes the course in a plane of 125 to 174 H.P. or \$800 for a trainee who completes the flight instruction in a plane of 175 to 225 H.P.

One benefit of this course which makes it even more appealing to the prospective trainees is that after both the Primary Course and the Secondary Course have been completed the student pilot is eligible to begin flight training at the Army training base, Randolph Field, "The West Point of the Air", if he applies for and is accepted for such training, without being required to pass through the first three months of preliminary training which are ordinarily required by the regular Army Training Program.

Since the inauguration of the first civilian pilot training course in the fall of 1939 this program of the Civil Aeronautics Administration has been expanding constantly. It is now being carried on at more than 450 schools all over the country and since its inception more than 21,000 pilots have been trained and 15,000 are in the process of being trained during the present term.

The program and its method of presentation have been highly successful and the results most gratifying to all concerned. Beyond all doubt every citizen of the United States will agree that this Civilian Pilot Training Program has been and will continue to be a most successful and most important step in the adequate preparation of our country for times of either peace or war. No one can deny that this program will certainly aid the constantly forward progress and increase the chances of success of both this nation and its citizens.

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