

CFIDarren Newsletter

The Perfect Flight, Transponders, Security

Issue #40

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Quote of the Month

"When the weight of the paper equals the weight of the airplane, only then can you go flying."

- attributed to Donald Douglas
(Mr. DC-n)

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Thank you for taking the time to read this safety message

This edition brings an Unusual Special on the best selling IFR Checkride Prep Book on the market. Included is an article about the Top 7 Airport Security Threats, and finally, a brand new article on the perfect flight. At the end of this email, check out the Video of the Month, about Betty Wall, a WW2 pilot. If you use Facebook, we've added 80 photos to a new photogallery called [Military Air Power](#), many of which have descriptions.

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Thanks for your continued support... Darren

Transponder Operations

This feature is courtesy of Nick Modders, CFI/CFII:

Question: When should your transponder be on?

Answer: Air Traffic Control uses a ground taxi monitoring system to monitor surface movements. The system, ASDE-X, enables air traffic controllers to detect potential runway conflicts by providing detailed coverage of movement on runways and taxiways. ASDE-X collects data from a variety of sources to track vehicles and aircraft on the airport movement area and obtain identification information from aircraft transponders.

As such, the 2012 AIM (4-1-20 a3) states, all aircraft should turn transponders "on" or normal altitude reporting position prior to moving on the airport surface. The section goes on to point out that transponders should be operated at all times while in controlled airspace and in uncontrolled airspace (Class G) unless requested by ATC.

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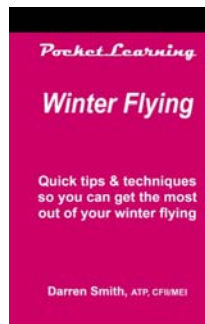
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(PocketLearning) This 44 page guide offers quick tips & techniques so you can get the most out of your winter flying - safely. Includes information on Winter Preflight, Induction Icing, Carb Icing, Airframe Icing, Tail Stalls, Hypothermia Strategies for Reducing the Risk, Winter Survival Kit, Aeronautical Decision Making, and the Personal Minimums Checklist. Regular price: \$8 (Free Shipping to US addresses). ISBN: 978-1468035070



Aviation Acronyms, Contractions, & Mnemonics (PocketLearning)

A complete pilot resource for aviation acronyms and contractions for every sector of aviation. Written by a pilot for pilots, this book provides instant answers to weather reports with confusing codes and aviation material with undefined acronyms. This book has been in constant publication since 2004 and is frequently updated. For free lifetime updates, register your book (instructions included). 90 pages. Designed to fit in your flight bag, size 5" x 8" Regular Price: \$12 (Free Shipping to US addresses). ISBN-13: 978-1468069501



Using the NASA Form (PocketLearning)

Practical advice and tips using the NASA form when you've violated the FARs. This guide will walk you step by step through filing a NASA safety report. It will tell you the techniques and traps to submit a good report AND keep your pilot certificate unblemished. You only have 10 days to submit your report, so this is the tool you want to have ahead of time. As airspace gets more complicated, and the economy doesn't allow us to fly as much as we'd like, the chance of making an error go up. Well I said error, but the FAA looks at these little errors as FAR violations which put a pilot's certificate at risk. The NASA form is the get out of jail free ticket. What most pilots don't realize is that a poorly written/executed NASA form could be excluded meaning there's no protection. Here's the product that helps you save your ticket. 40 pages Designed to fit in your flight bag, size: 5"x8" Regular Price: \$12(Free Shipping to US addresses). ISBN: 978-1468096262



Top 7 Airport Security Events

I suppose the gentleman in Miami who tried to clear security with 7 snakes in his pants didn't make the list, but only because it happened last year. But here are 7 other stunning airport security events so far in 2012.

1. Dagger in a Hair Brush - An unusual weapon was found

the NASA form when you've violated the FARs



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Save Money, Get the Most

at Virginia's tiny Lynchburg Regional Airport: a hair brush with a dagger concealed inside the bristles. This was not your everyday knife, either, according to authorities: several inches long with an "ice-pick style blade". A stylist's defense against customer critiques? The TSA did not say.

2. Speargun - An unidentified passenger rather touchingly thought he'd be allowed to board his plane with a speargun in hand. If you think this security 'get' took place at a Hawaiian airport or somewhere in the Caribbean, nope. The speargun was confiscated at Salt Lake City International.

3. Chain Saw - Leatherface was nowhere in evidence when screeners at New York's Elmira-Corning Regional airport stopped a passenger from going through security with a gassed-up chainsaw in his carry-on. Chainsaw, okay; gasoline, not so much. The fuel was dumped, the chainsaw checked, and Mr. Fix-It was allowed to proceed on his way. Gasoline is, after all, a liquid and you can only bring 3 oz bottles of that.

4. Lipstick Stun Gun - A 350,000 volt stun gun cleverly designed to look like a lipstick case was found in a passenger's carry-on bag at Burlington (Vermont) International. These smaller airports definitely have the most interesting passengers, don't they?

5. Live Teargas Grenade - Must have been exciting at Phoenix's Sky Harbor airport when a passenger strolled through security with a live teargas grenade in a carry-on. As a TSA blogger put it, "Dispersed Teargas Grenade + Pressurized Cabin = Pandemonium". That pretty much covers it.

6. \$22,373 in Cash - A passenger at Jacksonville International turned in an abandoned bag to the TSA. It's not clear whether this Good Samaritan took a peek inside, but if he had, he'd have seen more than 22-thousand dollars in cash inside. The bag was reunited with its owner who must have been sweating bullets. And speaking of bullets...

7. 69 Loaded Guns (and counting) - As usual, the TSA confiscates a lot of guns: well over a thousand in 2011 alone. And so far this year, screeners discovered nearly 70 loaded guns in carry-ons. One recent incident that received considerable attention took place at the Dallas-Ft. Worth airport when TSA officers saw a weapon in a bag, but its owner - a 65 year old woman - left security before they could nab it.

Bargain Hunter

If you're in the market for a copy of the Practical Test



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Darren Smith, ATP, CFII/MEI

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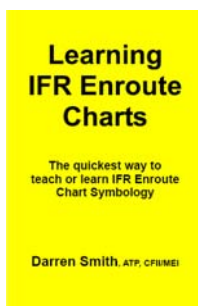
Planning the Perfect Flight

Several years back, I used to participate in a monthly safety meeting in which the presenter asked the question, "Have you ever had a perfect flight?" This was a question asked merely for effect with no answer expected. The presenter would then go on to say, "There is no such thing as a perfect flight" and would go on to list the many things that would happen along the way to the airplane. This discussion was about how we as pilots face the many threats to flight safety. Simple things like the weather, airplane problems, skill deficiencies are 'gotchas' that can ultimately cause errors and incidents in the aircraft.

There's a whole ecosystem of information about this chain of events called 'threat and error management.' And you can read about those things in my [Threat & Error Management series](#). This series of articles walks you through that 'chain of events' from Threats to Flight Safety to Integrating Threat & Error Management into your flying. There's no doubt, these are the soft skills which get you to think about HOW you fly rather than the traditional stuff you might read on how TO fly. When you get right down to it, at the lowest layers, it's all about the pilot and how he manages these threats and prevents them from becoming undesired aircraft states (*bad stuff*). It turns out that the pilot is the bottom line, where the buck stops, and the last line of defense in the chain of events. This is the heavy burden of being pilot-in-command but your aeronautical decision making and planning can set you up for success.

Planning the perfect flight is not just about putting a plotter against a chart, making a flight log, and checking the weather. It's actually a continuum of factors to consider for every flight and it comes before we even get to the threats to flight safety. Indeed, there is much which must go into a flight even before you touch the throttle.

To see the model, you have to look at a larger version of it. Click the image so you can see the full article:



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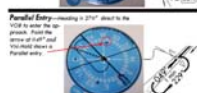
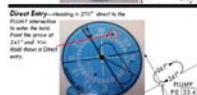


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Nip Holding Problems in the Bud

Examples:



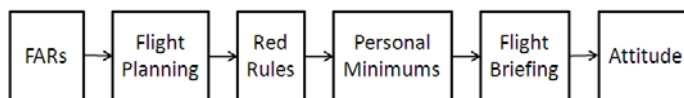
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FARs

Everyone understands how the FARs keep us safe. They specify very minimum standards of safety for any flight. But staying within the FARs do not necessarily guarantee the safety of our flight. Two key questions that we can pull out of the FARs are:

- Am I legal to conduct the flight? (7 factors)
- Is the airplane legal to conduct the flight? (5 factors)

This is discussed further in the book, [Instrument Checkride Reviewer](#).

Flight Planning

This seems to be the first thing that pilots neglect when it comes to undertaking a flight. Often its a quick check of the weather and press direct on the GPS. This is NOT flight planning. A thorough understanding of the available information about your flight takes some effort and thought. The old adage "failure to plan means you plan to fail" would be very accurate in aviation if it weren't for all the layers of safety that exist. The only challenge happens to be when luck runs out and our lack of planning could have prevented the accident. There are excellent products on the market to help you reconnect with flight planning, regardless of your level of pilot certificate.

Red Rules

In the January 17th edition of this newsletter, we shared the article on [Red Rules](#) and how these can help keep us safe when our judgement can become compromised by difficult flight conditions. No matter what kind of difficult spot you're in, you'll follow these self-imposed rules to ensure the safety of the flight. Red Rules protect you from Excess Risk. An example of a Red Rule for student pilots might be:

For traffic pattern work, I will not fly without a ceiling of at least 2000'.

Once you've created your first Red Rule, please drop me an email to tell me what you've come up with. I look forward to hearing from you. Read more about [Red Rules](#) at cfidarren.com.

What's Next?

Keep reading this article at cfidarren.com. While we have space here to cover 3 of the 6 elements of this model, the article continues the discussion of the remaining elements in further detail and refers you to other articles on my website or in previous issues of this newsletter. [To read more...](#)

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Safety Factoid

Maneuvering flight is one of the largest single producers of fatal accidents. Many of these accidents are caused by loss of control during low, slow flight; or striking wires, trees, or terrain while flying at low altitudes.

Video of the Month



Betty Wall: Girls Don't Fly

Betty Wall, an irrepressible 91-year-old woman, recounts how she earned her wings during WWII and taught young men to fly as a WASP.