

FAA Safety Team | Safer Skies Through Education

Meet the Airman Certification Standards (ACS)!

Notice Number: NOTC6068

The FAA is beginning to plan its transition to the new Airman Certification Standards (ACS) framework for certification of pilots, starting with the Private Pilot Airplane, Commercial Pilot Airplane, and Instrument Rating Airplane in the next 12 months.

Background: Since September 2011, the FAA has been working closely with a diverse group of aviation community stakeholders convened to help the agency improve the testing/training standards, guidance and test development/test management components of the airman certification process. Participants have developed the Airman Certification Standards (ACS) framework as a way to improve airman training and testing. The ACS provides an integrated, holistic system that clearly aligns airman testing with certification standards and guidance.

Built on the existing Practical Test Standards (PTS), which explicitly define the performance metrics for each flight proficiency element listed in 14 CFR, the ACS approach enhances the PTS by defining the specific elements, aeronautical knowledge, and risk management needed to support each Area of Operation/Task. By presenting the elements of knowledge, skill, and risk management in the integrated ACS format, the ACS better serves the applicant, the instructor, and the evaluator. It will also enable the FAA to clearly align knowledge/skill performance standards, guidance, and test materials.

The FAA continues to work with the industry group to refine the ACS and plan for its implementation. Current efforts involve FAA validation of the ACS documents, review of proposed updates to H-series handbooks, intensive review/revision of knowledge test questions, and support for industry efforts to prototype the ACS approach in selected locations.

To learn more about this effort, follow this link to the “ACS FAQs.”

[ACS FAQs for Applicants CFIs DPEs 6-17-15.pdf](#)

You can also find more ACS-related information, including sample ACS documents, on the AFS-630 web page http://www.faa.gov/training_testing/testing/