



SAFETY GRAM

February 2015

What greater pleasure is there than being the Pilot in Command and taking Mom, Dad, Spouse, Sibling, Kids, Friends, etc for a flight? Maybe a little added stress trying to make it a perfect experience – but it will turn out great, right? (OK, Dad ‘complimented me’ on getting 2 landings when I bounced the C172 onto the runway on my first flight with him...perfect is in the eye of the beholder -- we were able to taxi away!)

Taking passengers is a privilege (and a joy) of possessing a pilot certificate that places additional responsibility on you as PIC. I know you can quote 91.107 – ‘ensures that each person on board is briefed on how to fasten and unfasten that person’s safety belt, and if installed, shoulder harness.’ And paragraph 2 which requires the use of seat belt, and shoulder harness if equipped, whenever aircraft is taxiing, taking off, or landing. But is that the extent of your responsibility?

Of course, AFI 34-117 has a few other items for you to comply with; covenant not to sue, floatation devices and children under 4 or less than 40 pounds requiring approved seat pop into my mind, but is that even enough?

You are totally responsible – 91.3 says you are “the person who...has the final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of the flight.” So perhaps taking some time to discuss what your passengers can expect is in order before ‘stepping’. For the GA unfamiliar, things like route of flight, ensuring proper clothing, what sounds to expect, danger of taxiing aircraft and spinning propellers, what to expect if someone shouts ‘clear,’ and yes, airsick bags can all be foreign concepts. It is also probably a good time to cover a few emergency procedures and actions to take just in case (actions to take in the event of an engine fire on start, and safely evacuating aircraft might be nice for them to know). When you arrive at the airplane how about a lesson how to open and close the door – oh, and adjusting the seat – and what not to grab (yoke) if the seat slips back?

Wow, we haven’t even gotten into the plane yet – it appears there is a lot to think about. Can I get a Flight Attendant to brief for me? Probably not – but you can develop your own briefing to bolster your profession demeanor and help your passengers understand both the joys and responsibilities of being a GA passenger. The goal is for everyone to have a good time while allowing you to operate safely. Uninitiated expectations are usually somewhere between a luxury car ride and taking an airline flight. As a suggestion, while 91.519 is not *required*, it is for ‘large and turbine-powered multiengine airplanes and fractional ownership’ it sure is *applicable*. 91.519 provides a good outline

for items to brief – not everything pertains to a general aviation aircraft - but everything for a good passenger brief is there.

Don't forget, every good passenger briefing ends with, 'are there any questions?'

The confidence you exude will go a long way to creating a feeling of confidence and trust that your passengers will have. Whether you write it out, or just mentally develop a passenger briefing plan, your knowledge and confidence for a successful passenger trip will relax you and benefit your passengers.

Oh, and don't forget to teach the time honored pilot tradition – one last stop at the bathroom before flying.

Here is some additional information on passenger briefing that you may enjoy:

GA Safety Briefing (page 8)

http://www.faa.gov/news/safety_briefing/2007/media/janfeb2007.pdf

FAA Passenger Safety Briefing: How to Brief Passengers Like a Pro

<http://aviation.about.com/od/Emergency-Preparedness/tp/Faa-Passenger-Safety-Briefing-How-To-Brief-Passengers-Like-A-Pro.htm>

Passenger Briefing Checklist

http://flash.aopa.org/asf/volunteerpilots/app/content/pdf/ASI_PBF_Passenger%20Briefing%20Checklist.pdf

Technique/ The passenger Briefing

<http://flighttraining.aopa.org/magazine/2010/December/technique.html>

Assuming Command

http://flighttraining.aopa.org/magazine/2003/April/200304_Features_Assuming_Command.html

FLY SAFELY!



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