Australian Government



Civil Aviation SafetyAuthority

REGULATION REFORM Flight instructor ratings



Learn about new rules for flight instructor ratings in effect since 1 September 2014.

The full rules are contained in Part 61 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998.

Who should read this information sheet?

- > Pilots who hold, or plan to gain, a pilot instructor rating.
- > Approved testing officers (ATOs) and flight examiners.
- > Operators who employ pilots to conduct flight training.

What is a flight instructor rating?

To obtain a Part 61 flight crew licence, rating or endorsement, pilots need to complete training which is delivered by capable and qualified instructors. Pilots who conduct this training must hold a pilot instructor rating.

There are two types of pilot instructor ratings:

- > flight instructor rating
- > simulator instructor rating.

Quality training underpins pilot competency – this is why the role of instructors is safety critical.

This information sheet deals with flight instructor ratings.

Do I need a flight instructor rating?

If you want to conduct flight training in an aircraft, you will need to have a flight instructor rating.

A flight instructor rating issued under Part 61 permits the holder to conduct flight training in either an aircraft or a flight simulation training device (FSTD). A simulator instructor rating only authorises training in FSTDs.

To conduct flight training, an instructor must hold a flight instructor rating with at least one training endorsement.

What can a flight instructor do?

Provided they hold the appropriate training endorsement, a flight instructor can conduct flight training for pilot licences, ratings (except for flight examiner ratings) and endorsements (except for flight examiner endorsements).

Flight instructors can also:

- > grant design feature and flight activity endorsements to pilot licence holders
- > conduct multi-crew cooperation training
- > conduct differences training for variants of types of aircraft
- > conduct training for general pilot competency
- > conduct flight reviews

- > approve someone to fly solo
- > approve someone to fly an aircraft while receiving flight training for a pilot licence, rating or endorsement.

How do I get a flight instructor rating?

To get a flight instructor rating you must hold a private pilot licence (PPL), commercial pilot licence (CPL) or air transport pilot licence (ATPL). You also need to:

- > meet the educational requirements (that means you must either hold a tertiary qualification in teaching or a certificate IV in training and assessment, or complete an approved course of training in principles and methods of instruction)
- > meet specified aeronautical experience requirements
- > pass the instructor rating aeronautical knowledge examination
- complete a course of training for the rating and at least one training endorsement
- > pass a flight test for the rating and at least one training endorsement.

What is the flight instructor rating aeronautical knowledge examination?

All applicants for a flight instructor rating need to undertake the *Pilot Instructor Rating Exam – Common.* This examination assesses your knowledge of the legislation relating to a flight instructor rating and the principles and methods of instruction, with a focus on flight training.

The aeronautical knowledge standard for the flight instructor rating examination can be found in Schedule 3 of the Part 61 Manual of Standards (MOS).

What are the aeronautical experience requirements?

The aeronautical experience requirements must be met in the same aircraft category that will be used in the flight test for the rating. There are different aeronautical experience requirements for helicopters and aeroplanes.

For helicopters you must have at least 250 hours flight time as pilot **and** 100 hours flight time as pilot in command.

For aeroplanes you must have at least 200 hours flight time as pilot **and** 100 hours flight time as pilot in command.

These aeronautical experience requirements must be met before you start your flight training for a flight instructor rating. However, you do not have to meet these requirements if you can satisfy the following criteria.

For helicopters, that means you must:

- hold a CPL with a helicopter rating completed through an integrated training course and
- > hold a low-level rating and a helicopter low-level endorsement **and**
- > hold one of these combinations:
 - a night visual flight rules (NVFR) rating and a helicopter NVFR endorsement
 - an instrument rating and a single-engine helicopter instrument endorsement
 - an instrument rating and a multi-engine helicopter instrument endorsement.

For aeroplanes, you can commence the instructor rating course before being issued with your licence if you have:

- > completed your CPL with an aeroplane category rating in an integrated training course **and**
- > passed the flight test for the grant of the licence with an aeroplane category rating.

If you already hold an instructor rating and want to expand your privileges to instruct in an aircraft of another category, you need to have the aeronautical experience above and pass the instructor rating flight test in an aircraft of the second category.

What are training endorsements?

A training endorsement allows you to instruct someone for specific pilot authorisations. Training endorsements are outlined in a table in regulation 61.1235. The table details what authorisations and aeronautical experience requirements you need in order to be eligible for a particular training endorsement, and what each training endorsement authorises you to provide instruction in.

Example

To obtain a category-specific Grade 1 training endorsement you need to hold a CPL or an ATPL and have at least 500 hours flight time conducting initial flight training in an aircraft of the specified category. If you meet the criteria you will be able to undertake the activities authorised by the Grade 2 training endorsement, and supervise people who hold Grade 2 and Grade 3 training endorsements.

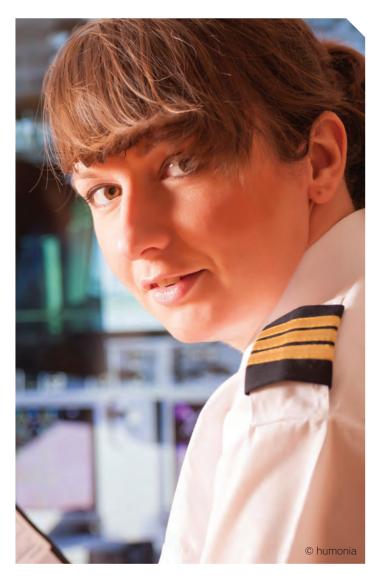
Example

To obtain a winch and rappelling operations training endorsement you need to hold a CPL or ATPL, a helicopter category rating, a low-level rating and a winch and rappelling operations endorsement. If you meet the criteria you will be able to conduct flight training for a winch and rappelling operations endorsement (note: this does not include training for the grant of a low-level rating).

What do I need to do to get a training endorsement?

You must complete a course of flight training appropriate to the training endorsement you are seeking. The training must address all of the relevant units of competency in the Part 61 MOS.

The training can only be undertaken by an operator that holds a Part 141 or Part 142 certificate that authorises them to conduct flight training for a flight instructor rating.



At the completion of the training course, you will be issued with a course completion certificate showing that you have been trained in all the units and assessed as competent. This certificate should be available to the examiner conducting your flight test, along with your training record.

There are no prescribed hours for a training course. However, courses need to cover the areas of training that are required for each training endorsement. Thorough instructor training is essential because the quality of training directly affects the competency of the pilots the instructor trains in the future.

What are the differences between a Part 61 flight instructor rating and a Civil Aviation Regulation (CAR) Part 5 flight instructor rating or training approval?

New flight crew licensing rules commenced on 1 September 2014. In the old system, flight instructors primarily conducted ab-initio (initial) training, as well as training for some ratings and endorsements. Other training was conducted by pilots who held particular approvals such as regulation 5.21 conversion training approvals and approved pilot approvals under the Civil Aviation Orders.

Under Part 61, anyone who wants to conduct flight training – including training that was previously delivered under an approval – must hold a flight instructor rating.

Not all Part 61 flight instructors will conduct ab-initio training for a licence. Eligible pilots can obtain a flight instructor rating to conduct training for operational ratings such as instrument ratings, night vision imaging systems ratings and aerial application ratings, as well as training for endorsements such as sling operations, winch and rappelling operations, low flying and aerial mustering.

You will also need a flight instructor rating if you want to conduct training in aerobatics or formation flight.

Changes at a glance

Under the old rules, pilots could get a specific approval to conduct flight training without holding an instructor rating. Under Part 61, anyone who conducts flight training must hold an instructor rating.

Under Part 61, a pilot who wants to conduct flight training for a licence, rating or endorsement must have a flight instructor rating with the appropriate endorsement (one rating and at least one of the 22 training endorsements that are category specific).

In the new Part 61 licence format, old Grade 1, 2 and 3 instructor ratings become Grade 1, 2 and 3 training endorsements on the flight instructor rating, along with any other training endorsements.

The Part 61 Grade 3 training endorsement does not include basic instrument flying like the CAR Part 5 Grade 3 instructor rating did – keep reading for more information.

Unlike the old rating, a Part 61 flight instructor rating does not expire.

Flight instructor proficiency checks replace flight instructor rating renewals.

PPL holders may obtain a flight instructor rating to conduct flight training for design feature and flight activity endorsements.

Training for some flight activities may be conducted by a flight instructor independently of a Part 141 or 142 training operator.

Under Part 61 there are no hours specified for flight instructor rating or training endorsement courses, however training needs to be adequate.

Competency standards have been published in the Part 61 MOS for the instructor rating and training endorsements.

All instructors need to complete training in the principles and methods of instruction.



What are the transition rules for the flight instructor rating?

If you held an instructor rating or training authorisation (such as a CAR 5.21 conversion training approval) prior to 1 September 2014, you are entitled to a Part 61 flight instructor rating and appropriate endorsements. However, you cannot continue conducting training **after 1 September 2018** unless you:

- > hold a tertiary qualification in teaching or
- > hold a certificate IV in training and assessment or
- > complete an approved course of training in principles and methods of instruction.

If you are a Grade 1, 2 or 3 flight instructor (aeroplane) who completed your training in accordance with the syllabus in Section 40.1.7 of the Civil Aviation Order (CAO), you would have completed an approved course of training in principles and methods of instruction as part of your initial instructor training.

For more information about transition rules, refer to the Flight crew licensing transition provisions – Part 61 information sheet.

What Part 61 training endorsements will my CAR Part 5 instructor rating entitle me to?

Under the transition provisions, you will be entitled to the equivalent Part 61 rating and endorsements that you held with your CAR Part 5 instructor rating.

Example

Rhonda has an aeroplane Grade 1 flight instructor rating. She does not have an instrument rating or any other approvals. When issued with a Part 61 licence, Rhonda's flight instructor rating will have the following training endorsements.

- Grade 1 training endorsement (aeroplane).
- Class rating training endorsement (single-engine aeroplane).
- Design feature training endorsement.
- Night VFR training endorsement (aeroplane).
- Instructor rating training endorsement.

Example

Annette has a helicopter Grade 1 flight instructor rating. She has completed the CAO 40.3.7 training that is prescribed in subparagraph 11.3, which allows her to conduct flight training at night and basic instrument flight training. Annette is also approved to conduct training in multi-engine helicopters, training for an instrument rating and training for the night vision imaging systems endorsement. When issued with a part 61 licence, Annette will receive a flight instructor rating with the following training endorsements.

- Grade 1 training endorsement (helicopter).
- Class rating training endorsement (single-engine helicopter).
- Type rating training endorsement (limited to those specified on her type rating training endorsement).
- Night VFR training endorsement (helicopters).
- Instrument rating training endorsement (helicopter).
- Instructor rating training endorsement (helicopter).
- Night vision imaging system rating training endorsement.

Example

Janet has an approval under CAR 5.21 to conduct endorsement training in a SAAB 340 aircraft, and under CAR 5.20 to conduct training for an instrument rating. When issued with a Part 61 licence, Janet will receive a flight instructor rating with a type rating training endorsement (SAAB 340) and an instrument rating training endorsement (aeroplane).

Example

Frank has a Grade 2 helicopter flight instructor rating and has accrued 80 hours of flight instruction. When issued with a Part 61 licence, Frank's flight instructor rating will have the following training endorsements.

- Grade 3 training endorsement (helicopters).
- Grade 2 training endorsement (helicopters).
- Class rating training endorsement (single-engine helicopters).

Frank's Grade 2 training endorsement will limit him to conducting the activities authorised by a Grade 3 training endorsement until he has completed 200 hours of initial flight training - refer to subregulation 202.272 (5). He will also not be able to conduct training involving a simulated engine failure until he has completed 100 hours of flight training.

Example

Michael has a Grade 3 flight instructor rating and a multiengine training approval. His chief flying instructor has also approved him to conduct training in spinning and aerobatics. When issued with a Part 61 licence, Michael's flight instructor rating will have the following training endorsements.

- Grade 3 training endorsement (aeroplane).
- Class rating training endorsement (single-engine aeroplane and multi-engine aeroplane).
- Design feature training endorsement.
- Night VFR training endorsement (aeroplane).
- Spinning training endorsement.
- Aerobatics training endorsement.

Example

Rupert has an approval under CAO 29.10 to conduct low flying training and aerial stock mustering operational training in helicopters. He also has an approval under CAR 5.20 to conduct training for an aerial application rating (day and night) in helicopters, and an approval under CAR 5.21 for conversion training in a Bell 206. When issued with a Part 61 licence, Rupert will receive a flight instructor rating with the following training endorsements.

- Class rating training endorsement (single-engine helicopter).
- Low-level rating training endorsement (helicopter).
- Aerial application rating (day) training endorsement (helicopter).
- Aerial application rating (night) training endorsement (helicopter).

What are the differences between an old Grade 3 instructor rating (aeroplane) and a new flight instructor rating with a Grade 3 training endorsement (aeroplane category)?

The most significant differences between the old Grade 3 flight instructor rating and the new flight instructor rating with a Grade 3 training endorsement are the privileges. The Part 61 Grade 3 endorsement does not include training for the Night VFR rating or basic instrument flying. Also, instead of direct and indirect supervision, supervision of instructors is now managed by the flight training operator.



The following table highlights the other differences.

Authorisations provided by a CAR Part 5 Grade 3 flight instructor rating	Authorisations provided by a CASR Part 61 Flight instructor rating with Grade 3 training endorsement
Conduct flight training in all sequences for a PPL and a CPL	Conduct flight training for RPLs, PPLs and CPLs except for basic instrument flight training
Conduct basic instrument flight training	Basic instrument flight training not permitted unless the holder has a night VFR training endorsement or an instrument rating training endorsement
Conduct flight training under the direct supervision of a Grade 1 flight instructor	Conduct flight training under the supervision of a flight instructor with a Grade 1 training endorsement
After accruing 100 hours of elementary instruction, conduct flight training under indirect supervision of a Grade 1 flight instructor	No equivalent – supervision rules are the responsibility of Part 141 and 142 training operators
-	Conduct training for an RPL endorsement
Conduct training for a night VFR rating	Not permitted unless the instructor holds the night VFR rating training endorsement
Give flight training for the issue of a single-engine aeroplane class endorsement	Conduct training for a single-engine aircraft class rating
If the holder had an approval under CAR 5.20(1) to give training for a flight crew rating, they could do so under the direct supervision of a Grade 1 flight instructor	The instructor has the appropriate training endorsement
If the holder had an approval, they could conduct training for the issue of a multi-engine aeroplane endorsement	The instructor has a class rating training endorsement (multi- engine aeroplane)
After accruing 100 hours of elementary instruction, could send students solo in sequences where the student had already completed solo sequences	Send students solo, other than first solo flight

What are the differences between an old Grade 2 instructor rating (helicopter) and a new flight instructor rating with a Grade 3 training endorsement (helicopter category)?

The most significant differences between the old Grade 2 flight instructor rating and the new flight instructor rating with a Grade 3 training endorsement are that you cannot conduct simulated engine failures until you have logged 100 hours of instruction under your Grade 3 training endorsement. Also, instead of direct and indirect supervision, supervision of instructors is now managed by the flight training operator. Other differences are detailed in the table below.

Changes at a glance

Authorisations provided by a CAR Part 5 Grade 2 flight instructor rating	Authorisations provided by a CASR Part 61 flight instructor rating with Grade 3 training endorsement
Conduct flight training in all sequences for a CPL except basic instrument flight	Conduct flight training for RPLs, PPLs and CPLs except for basic instrument flight
-	Cannot conduct flight training involving simulated engine failure until the instructor has accrued 100 hours in the activities authorised by the Grade 3 training endorsement
Conduct basic instrument flight training if the holder has completed the specified course of training	Not permitted unless the instructor holds a night VFR training endorsement or an instrument rating training endorsement – both of these endorsements permit the delivery of basic instrument flight training
Conduct flight training under the direct supervision of a Grade 1 flight instructor	Conduct flight training under the supervision of a flight instructor with a Grade 1 training endorsement
After accruing 150 hours of elementary instruction, conduct flight training under indirect supervision of a Grade 1 flight instructor	No equivalent - supervision rules are the responsibility of Part 141 and 142 operators
-	Conduct training for an RPL endorsement
Conduct training for a night VFR rating only if the holder has completed the specified course of training	Not permitted unless the instructor holds a night VFR training endorsement
Give flight training for the issue of a single engine helicopter endorsement	Conduct training for a single-engine aircraft class rating
If the holder had an approval under CAR 5.20(1) to give training for a flight crew rating, they could do so under direct supervision of a Grade 1 flight instructor	The instructor needs to hold the appropriate training endorsement
If the holder had an approval, they could conduct training for the issue of a multi-engine helicopter endorsement	The instructor needs to hold the type rating training endorsement for the particular helicopter type
After accruing 150 hours of elementary instruction, send students solo	Send students solo, other than first solo flight



Who can conduct basic instrument flight training?

Basic instrument flight training can only be conducted by the holder of a night VFR training endorsement or an instrument rating training endorsement.

Under the old regulations, a Grade 3 aeroplane flight instructor was authorised to conduct basic instrument flight training as this was included in the Grade 3 training course. A Grade 2 helicopter flight instructor needed to complete a course of training with a Grade 1 instructor.

Basic instrument flight training was excluded from the new Grade 3 training endorsements mainly to address the consequences of the transition rules and make it possible for an instructor to gain a Grade 3 training endorsement without needing the additional training for basic instrument flying.

Example

Fiona holds a flight instructor rating with a Grade 2 training endorsement (aeroplane).

To instruct in basic instrument flight for a student training for a PPL, Fiona would have to hold either a night VFR rating and a night VFR training endorsement, or an instrument rating and an instrument rating training endorsement.

Who can conduct a Knowledge Deficiency Report (KDR) assessment?

A Knowledge Deficiency Report (KDR) provides a candidate who has undertaken an aeronautical knowledge examination, and their training provider, with information about any topic areas where their knowledge was deficient.

Under Part 61, a flight examiner has to make sure an applicant has sufficient knowledge in the topics on their KDR. One option is to rely on a KDR assessment that has been made by the holder of an instructor rating with a Grade 1 or Grade 2 training endorsement.

Otherwise, the examiner needs to conduct the KDR assessment.

Who can conduct a flight review?

A flight review can be conducted by an instructor who holds a Grade 1 or 2 training endorsement or a training endorsement for the relevant rating.

The Grade 3 training endorsement doesn't authorise the holder to conduct a flight review.

Instructors are not allowed to conduct training or a flight review for a rating or endorsement unless they are authorised to conduct the operation themselves.

Can I conduct a flight review independently?

The purpose of a flight review is to provide a pilot with the opportunity to receive training that refreshes their flying skills and operational knowledge. It is normal for some pilot skills to deteriorate over time and so the flight review ensures that pilot skills remain at, or are brought back up to standard. CASA strongly encourages training in a flight review.

A flight instructor delivering training during a flight review can only deliver that training if employed by an operator with a Part 141 or 142 certificate that authorises the conduct of flight training for the rating under review.

In some circumstances, a pilot may be operating within a system where they are subject to regular proficiency checking and so there may be no need for training during a flight review. In this case, the flight review does not have to be conducted under a Part 141 or 142 operator.

What training can I conduct if I have a PPL and an instructor rating?

If you have a PPL you can hold an instructor rating, however you will be restricted to conducting training for the grant of a design feature or a flight activity endorsement. You cannot conduct training for the grant of a pilot licence, an operational rating or rating endorsements.

I am conducting training for a flight activity endorsement independent of a Part 141 or 142 training operator. Do I need to keep training records?

Yes. A flight instructor who conducts training for a flight crew endorsement independently of a training organisation must record the training and retain the training record for at least seven years. The training record should reflect all the training conducted in accordance with the Part 61 MOS, the standard attained and a copy of the certificate of completion.

Does training for the general competency rule have to be done under a Part 141 or 142 operator?

No, training to satisfy the general competency rule for pilots can be undertaken outside of a Part 141 or 142 operator, provided the flight instructor who delivers the training holds the appropriate training endorsement allowing them to conduct flight training in the aircraft being used.

The flight instructor must meet the competency rule to operate the aircraft, have a current flight instructor proficiency check and meet any other rating recent experience requirements.

Example

Peter has just purchased a Beech Baron aircraft and needs to undergo some training to attain competency in operating it. Peter already has a class rating for multi-engine aeroplanes and a multi-engine aeroplane instrument rating with a current proficiency check. He has asked Rachel, a flight instructor, to familiarise him with the aircraft operation and fly with him for some general handling competency and an instrument approach.

To undertake this training flight Rachel must hold a class rating training endorsement (multi-engine aeroplane), a current flight instructor proficiency check, a multi-engine aeroplane instrument rating and an instrument rating training endorsement. Rachel also needs to meet the general competency rule for operating the Baron.



Are there any limitations on exercising the privileges of a flight instructor rating?

Yes, there are several general limitations that apply to all flight instructor ratings.

- A flight instructor can only instruct in an aircraft or an FSTD in the particular aircraft category for which the instructor rating was granted.
- A flight instructor can only conduct flight training for a licence, rating or endorsement on an operational rating if they are employed by a Part 141 or Part 142 operator authorised to conduct the training.
- > A flight instructor must hold the training endorsement for the training they plan to deliver.
- If making an assessment of a KDR, the flight instructor must hold a Grade 2 training endorsement or the relevant training endorsement.

What is an instructor proficiency check?

An instructor proficiency check is an assessment of a pilot's competency to conduct flight instruction. The standards for instructor proficiency checks are prescribed in Schedule 6 of the Part 61 MOS.

Pilots are required to demonstrate that they can competently conduct aeronautical knowledge training and flight training in an aircraft appropriate to the training endorsements they hold.

Demonstrating aeronautical knowledge does not have to cover all of the training endorsements you hold, however you will be required to demonstrate competency in at least one training endorsement.

If your training endorsements authorise you to conduct flight reviews, you will also be required to demonstrate your knowledge of conducting a flight review.

How long does an instructor proficiency check last for?

If you hold a flight instructor rating you will need to undertake an instructor proficiency check within 12 months of initial issue of the rating and every 24 months thereafter.

Example

Susan obtained her initial flight instructor rating on 23 June 2014. Her first proficiency check was due on 30 June 2015. Susan successfully completed her instructor rating proficiency check on 12 June 2015 which means her next flight instructor proficiency check is due on 30 June 2017.

Do I need to pass a separate flight instructor proficiency check for each training endorsement I hold?

No, you only need to demonstrate your competency in at least one of the training endorsements you hold.

If you hold a class rating training endorsement (multi-engine) or a type rating training endorsement for a multi-engine aircraft, you should consider alternating proficiency checks in a multiengine aircraft or FSTD approved for the purpose.

Note: Part 141 and 142 operators have obligations to conduct standardisation and proficiency checks of their instructors (for Part 141, see regulations 141.185 to 141.195 and for Part 142, see regulations 142.315 to 142.330).

Does a flight instructor proficiency check meet the requirement for an aircraft rating flight review?

Yes, the flight instructor rating proficiency check meets the requirements for an aircraft rating flight review for the class or type of aircraft in which the proficiency check was undertaken.

Example

Philip's most recent flight instructor proficiency check was conducted in a multi-engine aeroplane covered by his class rating. This will meet the flight review requirement for his multi-engine aeroplane class rating flight review.

He can continue operating single-engine class-rated aeroplanes because that is a privilege of the multi-engine aeroplane class rating. However, his next flight instructor proficiency check (if undertaken in a single engine aeroplane) will only meet the flight review requirement for the single engine aeroplane class rating and he would need to undertake a flight review for his multi-engine aeroplane class rating separately.



Who can conduct a flight instructor proficiency check?

The only people who can conduct flight instructor proficiency checks are flight examiners, CASA examiners and people who hold an approval granted under regulation 61.040.

Flight examiners must hold a flight instructor rating flight test endorsement, and must also be authorised to conduct flight instruction for the training endorsement that is included in the check. This means they need to satisfy the recent experience and proficiency check requirements.

What happens if I fail my flight instructor proficiency check?

You cannot conduct flight instruction until you have successfully completed a flight instructor proficiency check.

Are there other ways of satisfying the flight instructor proficiency check requirement?

Yes, you can also satisfy the flight instructor proficiency check requirement if you:

- > pass a flight test for a training endorsement that was done more than six months after the initial flight instructor rating flight test
- complete an operator proficiency check that covers the conduct of flight instruction
- Successfully participate in a training and checking system conducted by an operator that holds a regulation 61.040 approval for that purpose.

Refer to CASA's information sheet on proficiency checks for more details

Want to know more?

Visit the licensing regulations section on the CASA website.

The new rules for flight instructor ratings are contained in Part 61 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations:

- > CASR Dictionary
- > Regulation 61.010 definitions for Part 61
- Regulation 61.075 definition of aeronautical experience
- Regulations 61.080 and 61.090 definitions of flight time as pilot and flight time as pilot in command
- > Regulation 61.195 flight training requirements
- Regulation 61.1165 privileges of flight instructor ratings
- Regulations 61.1170 to 61.1180 limitations on exercising the privileges of a flight instructor rating
- > Regulation 61.1185 requirements for grant of flight instructor ratings
- Regulation 61.1190 privileges of simulator instructor ratings
- Regulations 61.1195 to 61.1205 limitations on exercising the privileges of a simulator instructor rating
- Regulation 61.1210 requirements for grant of simulator instructor ratings
- Regulations 61.1215 to 61.1230 obligations of pilot instructors
- > Regulations 61.1235 to 61.1252 training endorsements

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