

Advisory Circular

AC61-20

Revision 9

22 March 2018

Pilot Licences and Ratings— Recreational Pilot Licence

General

Civil Aviation Authority advisory circulars contain guidance and information about standards, practices, and procedures that the Director has found to be an **acceptable means of compliance** with the associated rules and legislation.

However, the information in the advisory circular does not replace the requirement for participants to comply with their obligations under the Civil Aviation Rules, the Civil Aviation Act 1990 and other legislation.

An advisory circular reflects the Director's view on the rules and legislation. It expresses CAA policy on the relevant matter. It is not intended to be definitive. Consideration will be given to other methods of compliance that may be presented to the Director. When new standards, practices, or procedures are found to be acceptable they will be added to the appropriate advisory circular. Should there be any inconsistency between this information and the rules or legislation, the rules and legislation take precedence.

An advisory circular may also include **guidance material** generally, including guidance on best practice as well as guidance to facilitate compliance with the rule requirements. However guidance material should not be regarded as an acceptable means of compliance.

An advisory circular may also include **technical information** that is relevant to the rule standards or requirements.

Purpose

This advisory circular provides guidance material on pilot licences and ratings for recreational pilot licence, to assist applicant(s), to meet the requirements of Civil Aviation Rule Part 61 *Pilot Licences and Ratings*.

Related Rules

This advisory circular relates to Civil Aviation Rule Part 61 – specifically Subpart H.

Change Notice

Revision 9 expresses the legal direction that private pilot licence (PPL) holders may exercise the privileges of a recreational pilot licence (RPL) provided they hold a current DL9 medical certificate.

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Introduction

Rather than being required to hold a class 2 medical certificate issued under the Civil Aviation Act, an RPL applicant or holder is required to meet the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) medical fitness standards that are applicable for a Class 2, 3, 4 or 5 driver licence with a passenger endorsement. The risks associated with the lower medical standard are mitigated by more restrictive privileges and limitations imposed on the RPL holder. Student pilots who meet the NZTA DL9 medical standard may fly solo during training and this allows ab-initio pilots to train for the RPL or PPL.

The knowledge, flight experience and competency standards for the RPL are the same as those specified for the issue of a private pilot licence aeroplane or helicopter (PPL (A) or (H)).

The RPL is issued in accordance with Part 61 and as defined by rules 61.357(a)(1) and (2) it is only valid for single-engine non-pressurised light aeroplanes or single-engine helicopters flown within New Zealand in accordance with rule 61.357(b)(1).

The New Zealand RPL is a national licence that is not recognised overseas under the standards and recommended practices of ICAO Annex 1- Personnel Licensing and therefore cannot form the basis for the issue of a foreign licence.

Medical Requirements

The medical standards for training towards, for the issue of, and for the continuing use of, an RPL are the NZTA medical fitness standards that are applicable for a Class 2, 3, 4 or 5 drivers licence with a passenger endorsement.

A student applying for the issue of an RPL must be examined by a medical practitioner authorised to use and complete the NZTA form DL9 in accordance with the NZTA document *Medical Aspects of Fitness to Drive: A Guide for Medical Practitioners* issued by the Director of Land Transport.

The NZTA form DL9 is completed by the medical practitioner who will provide the signed DL9 form to the person undergoing the medical examination at the conclusion of the examination.

A student applying for the issue of an RPL needs to complete form CAA 24061/01-RPL - *Application for Issue of Recreational Pilot Licence – (RPL)* and include a photocopy or scanned copy (ONLY) of all pages of the completed DL9 form, with their licence application paperwork.

DO NOT send the original DL9 with the application; this should be retained as it meets the medical certificate requirements for solo flight.

In accordance with the periods specified in rule 61.355(a)(2)(i) or (ii), as applicable, the licence holder must undergo a new medical examination with a medical practitioner and obtain a completed and signed DL9 form from the medical practitioner.

Send a COPY of the new DL9 to CAA.

The required driver licence standard of medical fitness for an RPL is considered acceptable, given the limitations imposed on the licence holder as prescribed in rule 61.357(b).

Recreational pilot licence holders should carry at least a copy of the current DL9 form while flying.

A person who holds an RPL or exercises the privileges of the licence must comply with every condition, restriction and endorsement on their current NZTA DL9 medical certificate.

In addition, the holder of an RPL or a person wishing to exercise the privileges of the licence must not do so if the holder is aware of, or suspects, any change or deterioration in his or her medical condition or the emergence of any previously undetected medical condition.

Eligibility Requirements

Rule 61.355(a)(3) Flight experience

The flight time experience required for an RPL(A) or RPL(H) is the same as for a PPL(A) and PPL(H) specified as acceptable to the Director in Appendix I, III, IV, and V of AC61-3 *Private Pilot Licence*. Cross crediting of flight time is as allowed by Appendix I to AC61-3.

In accordance with rule 61.105(a)(2) a person who does not hold a pilot licence must hold at least a current class 2 or NZTA DL9 medical certificate before flying an aircraft solo as a student pilot.

Rule 61.355(a)(4) Written examination credit

Under rule 61.355(a)(4), an applicant for an RPL is required to have a written examination credit, or approved equivalent, that covers the following private pilot licence subject areas:

Subject No. 2: Flight Radiotelephony

Subject No. 4: Air Law

Subject No. 6: Air Navigation and Flight Planning

Subject No. 8: Meteorology

Subject No. 10: Human Factors

Subject No. 12: Aircraft Technical Knowledge Aeroplane or Helicopter (as applicable)

The written examination credit comes into effect when all the written examinations have been passed in the qualifying period of three years and the written examination credit is valid for three years from the date of issue as detailed in rules 61.17(c) and (d)(1) for a PPL and a RPL. .

An examination knowledge deficiency report (KDR) is a report, issued on completion of a written examination that details areas where questions were answered incorrectly. The applicant for an RPL flight test must provide the flight examiner with written examination KDRs in accordance with rule 61.21(a) (5). These KDRs, with content acknowledged against the relevant rule reference(s), must have been certified by a Category A or B flight instructor that the applicant has been examined in these areas and their knowledge has improved. The flight examiner conducting the flight test will test the applicant's knowledge of the written examination subject areas including but not limited to items included in the KDRs.

RPL written examinations are based on the PPL syllabuses specified in Appendix II of AC6-3 *Private Pilot Licence*.

Note: *The formal English language proficiency assessment is not required for an RPL as the RPL is not recognised outside New Zealand. However in accordance with rule 61.11(b), applicants must have sufficient ability in reading, speaking, understanding and communicating in the English language to enable the applicant to adequately carry out the responsibilities of a pilot exercising the privileges of the pilot licence.*

Approved equivalent

A person holding a current RPL(A) issued under Part 61 who wishes to gain an RPL(H) is required to gain a pass in the written examination subject PPL Aircraft Technical Knowledge (Helicopter). The holder's RPL(A) together with the PPL Aircraft Technical Knowledge (Helicopter) pass are an approved equivalent to the written examinations required for an RPL(H).

A person holding a current RPL(H) issued under Part 61 who wishes to gain an RPL(A) is required to gain a pass in the written examination subject PPL Aircraft Technical Knowledge (Aeroplane). The holder's RPL(H) together with the PPL Aircraft Technical Knowledge (Aeroplane) pass are an approved equivalent to the written examinations required for an RPL(A).

RNZAF pilots

Examination pass results gained by a RNZAF pilot, who has successfully completed at least the basic phase of the NZDF ground, and flight training for aeroplanes will be accepted as approved equivalents to the written examinations required by rule 61.153(a)(6), for the issue of an RPL(A), except for the PPL Air Law written examination. In addition, for an RPL(H), a RNZAF pilot will need a pass in the written examination PPL Aircraft Technical Knowledge (Helicopter).

Examination pass results gained by a RNZAF pilot who has successfully completed at least the first pilot day/night qualification for helicopters will be accepted by the CAA as an approved equivalent to the written examinations required by rule 61.153(a)(6) for the issue of an RPL(H) or PPL(H) except for the required PPL Air Law written examination.

Rule 61.355(a)(5) Terrain awareness training

PPL(A) or (H) terrain awareness training is acceptable to the Director for the issue of an RPL(A) or RPL(H) as appropriate.

Rule 61.355(a)(6) Flight test for initial issue

An applicant for an RPL is required to demonstrate competence and knowledge to a flight examiner in a flight test in the appropriate category of aircraft. This demonstration is to be in accordance with the standards specified in the *Flight Test Standard Guide: Recreational and Private Pilot Licence Issue and Biennial Flight Review (Aeroplane) or (Helicopter)*, and includes a demonstration of the knowledge of the privileges and limitations of an RPL as detailed in rule 61.357.

An applicant for an RPL initial issue flight test does not need to hold an aircraft type rating on the aircraft that is used for the flight test as the examiner will issue the type rating on completion of a successful demonstration.

Note: A flight test report is only valid for 3 months.

Issue

Application for issue

A person who meets all the requirements for issue of an RPL should apply for the issue of an RPL using form [CAA 24061/01-RPL – Application for Issue of Recreational Pilot Licence – \(RPL\)](#).

Rule 61.355(b)(2) Requirement for biennial flight review (BFR)

A person who holds a valid RPL, PPL, CPL or ATPL may exercise the privileges of a recreational pilot licence (aeroplane or helicopter as applicable) provided that the person holds a medical certificate prescribed by rule 61.355(a)(2) [Land Transport (DL9)] and has met the BFR requirements of rule 61.39 within the previous 24 months.

An RPL, PPL, CPL or ATPL licence holder whose BFR has not been current within the previous five years must pass the written PPL Air Law examination and complete a biennial flight review before exercising the privileges of the RPL.

Recent Flight Experience

A recreational pilot or a licence holder exercising the privileges of an RPL is required to comply with rule 61.37 (b) before carrying a passenger.

Rule 61.357 Privileges and limitations

Rules 61.357(a)(1) and (2) Type ratings

The only aircraft type ratings that may be endorsed or flown on an RPL(A) are single-engine non-pressurised aeroplanes with a MCTOW of 2000kg or less.

The only helicopter type ratings that may be endorsed or flown on an RPL(H) are single-engine helicopters with a MCTOW of 1500kg or less.

Rule 61.357(b)(4)(iv) Colour vision

A pass in the Ishihara colour vision screening test is acceptable to the Director for the holder of an RPL to operate into or out of a controlled aerodrome. Pilots who have previously held a class 1 or 2 medical certificate are deemed to meet this colour vision requirement.

Rule 61.41 (a) regarding use of lower licence privileges. This only provides for the holder of a CPL or an ATPL who wishes to exercise the privileges of a PPL where the holder only has a current class 2 medical certificate.

Rule 61.41 (b) applies to the exercise of RPL privileges by a PPL, CPL or ATPL holder provided the holder also holds a current DL9 driver licence medical certificate with passenger endorsement.

The holder of a PPL, ATPL or CPL exercising the privileges of an RPL on a Land Transport medical certificate (DL9) must be aware of the limitations of the RPL in accordance with **rule 61.357**.