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Teaching The Ts

I always enjoy the great techniques covered in Brian D. Johnson's articles, such as "What Am I Forgetting?" [September 2003 IFR Refresher].

In the Air Force, I was taught the same five Ts in a slightly different order: time, turn, throttle(s), twist, track, talk. Regardless of the order used, Brian's application of the five Ts when crossing an IFR en route fix also works well for student pilots passing a VFR checkpoint.

They can update ATA/time for the next leg, turn to planned heading, check cruise throttle (and prop, mixture, engine instruments), twist the OBS as a reminder of planned heading and twist the DG if it has precessed, check ground track versus the chart and decide when they need to talk next (activate flight plan, update weather, tune in CTAF, whatever).

Those who continued on to instrument training would meet their old friend the five Ts again. Just a thought.

Scott G. Saunders
Via e-mail

GATE Closed

In Dave Ison's article "U.S. Security And IFR" [August 2003 IFR Refresher], he stated that pilots arriving directly from Canada can qualify for the GATE program for re-entry to the United States.

It was my understanding that this program was put on hold after 9/11. I would have called the number provided but it is after hours on Friday. I was unable to locate any info on the customs website pertaining to the GATE program. What's up?

Ron Hays
Via e-mail

You are correct. The General Aviation Telephonic Entry program was shut down on 9/11, but CANPASS is still alive. Call 888-CANPASS for more information.

Personal SOPs

I thoroughly enjoyed Harry Kraemer's article "Are You Really Ready To Go?" in the July IFR. Checklist usage and the underlying discipline are key survival factors for pilots that probably are underestimated in non-professional general aviation operations.

For those pilots not flying for operators who establish their standard operating procedures, it's important to develop their own standardized ways of conducting airplane preparation for flight.

I usually find the checklist supplied by the local FBO inadequate, since it's typically missing a thorough passenger briefing section and at least two or three important checks (e.g. governor check before takeoff).

When designing my own checklist, I use the manufacturer's checklist as a basis and add my standard elements as needed. By doing so, I carry one standard checklist design from one aircraft to the other and establish my own SOPs.

The second advantage to creating your own checklist is that one reflects about the systems and their required state and therefore increases one's aircraft knowledge.

Given Mr. Kraemer's experience, he might be able to recommend his design or "personal procedures" to the readers of IFR.

Greg Zelenka, CFI
Via e-mail

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Coming Up In IFR Refresher

The Hunt For An Alternate — Vast fields of IMC spawned by wintertime warm fronts make the search for an alternate interesting.

Slippery Arrivals — The runway ahead may look good at the end of an approach, but at this time of year, it's worth asking before you land.

WAAS Up With WAAS?

(continued from page 9)

Aircraft equipped with Class 3 and Class 4 certified TSO-C146a WAAS receivers will be able to fly RNAV (GPS) approaches using LPV minima.

RNAV (GPS) approaches with LNAV/VNAV minima exist at more than 200 airports today and will be added to many more airports over the next few years.

According to the FAA Satellite Navigation Product Teams, Leesburg Executive Airport in Leesburg, Virginia, will be one of the first of several small airports to receive LPV minima, and the procedure is expected to be put in place in late 2003.

Chart Format

LPV and LNAV/VNAV really are enhancements to existing unaugmented RNAV (GPS) approaches. Instead of publishing separate instrument approach charts for LPV and LNAV/VNAV, existing RNAV (GPS) approach charts still will be used, with minima published for LPV, LNAV/VNAV, LNAV and circling.

Recent Jeppesen chart revisions have contained numerous updates to existing RNAV (GPS) approaches with the addition of an LPV column in the minimums section (currently LPV is marked "NA"). You also may see a column labeled "GLS PA." This is a placeholder for when WAAS precision approach minima are available and also currently is marked "NA."

The availability of WAAS will add a new dimension to instrument flying. When TSO-C146a Class 2 receivers are available, the capability of flying vertically guided instrument approaches into many small, remote airports will be a reality.

Judy Cadmus is a Master CFII and owns Avionics Training Unlimited Inc. in Collegetown, Pennsylvania. She and her husband fly an A36 Bonanza.

Personal SOPs

(continued from page 2)

Harry Kraemer writes: An important safety item that often is overlooked is the development of standard operating procedures. SOPs are a standardized and systematic way of accomplishing or executing a procedure. They often can be carried over from aircraft to aircraft.

One can think of SOPs as a written form of discipline. In fact, most pilots may not realize it, but they already have their own SOPs.

Go through the normal procedures checklist to start developing your own SOPs. Look at each section and ask yourself, "Do I need to add anything here?" If you fly with a co-pilot, there may be items that are delegated to that person, or the SOPs may designate who does what at any point of the flight.

Each and every operation will have its subtle differences. The items that you complete in addition to the printed checklist will become a part of your SOPs.

Here's what I do. After completing the walk-around checklist and before getting into the airplane, I stand in front of it to make sure that I have a clear path from the parking spot leading toward my taxi path. This also is a good time to double-check for tie-down ropes still attached and missed wheel chocks.

Another area that gets my attention is the before engine(s) start checklist. One of the last things that I do before flipping

on the master switch is to double- (sometimes triple-) check that the gear lever/handle is down. I usually add this in red on my own checklist.

Once on the runway for takeoff, I check that the compass and DG agree with the runway heading. If not, either I'm on the wrong runway or I need to set my DG to my compass.

Another area that I often address is the climb and descent checklist. Above 10,000 feet, landing and recognition lights off; below 10,000 feet MSL, they are back on.

I also set up standard procedures as to where I set power and to what power setting that I use to fly an approach, when the gear comes down and when approach flaps are set.

For example, between 15 to five miles out (depending on aircraft), I usually have a power setting that allows me to set approach flaps, and I usually can fly the entire approach (up to the FAF) with that power setting. Once at the FAF, I'm setting the power to another predetermined (in my SOPs) power setting. So basically there are two power settings for an approach.

Also for the approach and landing portion of the checklist, you can establish weather minimums for non-precision and precision approaches based on your experience level and equipment.

These are just a few examples and/or guidelines for developing your own SOPs. A good set of SOPs also will reduce pilot workload, especially in areas that usually are very high workload.

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