



FLIGHT CREW LICENSING

Getting your commercial pilot licence



Learn about the rules for commercial pilots—in effect since 1 September 2014. The full rules are contained in Part 61 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations.

This information sheet includes details about an exemption (**CASA EX99/18**) which came into effect on 1 September 2018. It provides an alternative to aircraft class rating and pilot type rating biennial flight reviews, with an aircraft category and multi-engine aircraft requirement.

Who should read this information sheet?

- › Pilots who want to gain a commercial pilot licence
- › Flight instructors
- › Flight examiners
- › Flight training organisations

What kind of operations does my commercial pilot licence authorise me to conduct?

A commercial pilot licence (CPL) authorises you to conduct private and commercial operations (refer to sub-regulation 2(7)(d) of the Civil Aviation Regulations 1988).

You can be the co-pilot in any operation and the pilot-in-command of any operation except the following:

- › multi-crew aircraft in charter or regular public transport operations
- › an aeroplane certified for single-pilot operations with a maximum take-off weight (MTOW) of more than 5700kg in regular public transport operations
- › turbojet aeroplanes with a MTOW of more than 3500kg in regular public transport operations.

You must hold the appropriate aircraft category on your CPL and the class or type rating for the aircraft you want to fly. Refer to CASA's **Aircraft class ratings** and **Aircraft type ratings** information sheets for more details.

If you want to fly as pilot-in-command or co-pilot in a multi-crew operation, as well as holding the appropriate aircraft rating, you must have completed an approved course of training in multi-crew cooperation. If you conducted multi-crew operations before 1 September 2015, you don't have to complete that training.





How do I get my CPL?

You must be at least 18 years old to get your CPL. You also need to do the following for the category rating you want to get with your CPL:

- learn the theory
- complete flight training at a CASR Part 141 or 142 flight training organisation
- meet the minimum aeronautical experience requirements (see below for more information)
- pass the CPL theory exam for the category rating set by CASA
- pass a CPL flight test for the licence and category rating.

These requirements must be met for each additional category rating you apply for once you also have your CPL.

What is involved in learning the CPL theory?

The theory syllabus for the CPL includes subjects such as flight rules and air law, aerodynamics, meteorology, navigation, human factors, operation, performance and planning, power plants and aircraft systems.

You can study the theory yourself if you have a self-learning course or you can attend classes at a flight training organisation (contact a flight training organisation to work out the best way for you to complete the theory training for the CPL).

If you are completing an integrated training course, the theory training is incorporated into the CPL training course.

The aeronautical knowledge standards are prescribed in Schedule 1 of the **Part 61 Manual of Standards** (MOS). The details of the knowledge standards for each unit are in Schedule 3 of the MOS.



What is a CPL theory exam?

A CPL exam includes seven exam subjects. Three of the subject exams are common and only need to be passed once. However, you need to pass all the exams within a two-year period.

If you already have your CPL and want to gain an additional category rating, you need to pass the remaining four category-specific subject exams.

More information about theory exams can be found on the CASA website. Flight training organisations can also provide details about the theory and exams.

What do I need to know about my flight training for a CPL?

You need to complete a course of flight training with a Part 141 or Part 142 flight training organisation. It includes basic general flying, as well as cross-country and instrument flying.

There are two types of courses: integrated courses and non-integrated courses. Part 142 flight training organisations conduct integrated courses and Part 141 flight training organisations conduct non-integrated courses.

The practical flight standards are prescribed in Schedule 2 of the Part 61 MOS.

Is basic instrument flying a requirement for CPL?

You need to complete basic instrument flying for a CPL(A) and if you are completing an integrated course of training for a CPL(H). Otherwise, basic instrument flying is optional.

If you obtain your CPL(H) without doing the instrument flying, it will include a note that your licence doesn't meet the international standard for a PPL. You can complete the instrument flying later.

What is an integrated training course?

An integrated training course is an intensive program that combines ground theory with practical flight training in a structured course and is designed to be completed within a condensed period of time. Theory training is delivered in parallel to the practical training as a planned integrated sequence. The benefit of integrated training is that the flying experience required is reduced compared to non-integrated training.



How much flying experience do I need to get my CPL?

The following table summarises the flying experience you need to have to obtain a CPL with an aeroplane, helicopter, or gyroplane rating.

Note: The table does not include the experience standards allowed under CAR Part 5 until 31 August 2018.

Experience	Minimum hours				
	Category rating integrated courses		Category rating non-integrated courses		
	Aeroplane	Helicopter	Aeroplane	Helicopter	Gyroplane
Aeronautical experience	150 *	100 **	200 **	150 **	150 *
Flight time as pilot	140 ^A	90 ^H	190 [@]	140 [@] (including at least 70)	70
Dual flight time	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	20
Pilot in command flight time	70 ^A	35 ^H	100 ^P	35	35
Pilot in command cross-country	20 ^{A#}	10 ^{H+}	20 [#]	10 ⁺	20 ^{X+}
Dual instrument time	10 [^]	10 [^]	10 [^]	10 [^]	10 [^]
Dual instrument flight time	5 ^A	5 ^H	5	5	n/a

* means up to five hours of the minimum aeronautical experience can be in an approved flight simulation training device.

** means up to five hours of the minimum aeronautical experience can be in a flight simulation training device or as tethered flight time.

@ means the flight time can be in an aircraft of any category.

A means flight time must be in registered or recognised aeroplanes.

H means flight time must be in registered or recognised helicopters.

G means flight time must be in registered or recognised gyroplanes.

X means flight time must be in powered aircraft (for gyroplane solo flight time, 10 hours must be in powered aircraft and a minimum of five hours must be in gyroplanes).

^ means instrument time can be completed in a flight simulation training device or aircraft.

means the flight time must include a flight of at least 150 nautical miles during which a full-stop landing is made at each of two aerodromes not within the flight training area for the aerodrome from which the flight began.

+ means the flight time must include a flight of at least 100 nautical miles during which a landing is made at each of two landing areas other than the one where the flight began.

P means at least the following hours of flight time as pilot in command of an aeroplane:

- (i) for an applicant holding a commercial pilot licence, or an air transport pilot licence, with the helicopter rating—60 hours
- (ii) for an applicant holding a private pilot licence with the helicopter rating—80 hours
- (iii) for any other applicant—100 hours.



What are the medical requirements for a CPL?

You need to have a Class 1 medical certificate to sit the CPL flight test, and whenever you are exercising the privileges of your CPL. **Class 1 medical certificates** are issued by CASA.

Since April 2018, holders of a CPL can undertake some operations with a Class 2 medical certificate. Refer to **changes to medical certification** on the CASA website.

If you are exercising PPL privileges, you only need a Class 2 medical certificate. If you are exercising RPL privileges, you only need a recreational aviation medical practitioner's certificate (RAMPC), however limitations apply.

You need to carry your medical certificate with you whenever you are flying.

How do I maintain the privileges of my CPL?

To keep flying you need to have a current aircraft rating.

Under Part 61, if you are flying aircraft covered by a class rating, you need to have done a flight review for that class rating within the previous 24 months.

If you have done a current multi-engine aeroplane class rating flight review, you can operate single-engine aeroplanes.

An exemption (CASA EX99/18) came into force on 1 September 2018 and provides an alternative to the aircraft rating flight review. Instead of needing a flight review for each aircraft rating, pilots only need to hold a valid flight review in an aircraft of the same category that was completed in the previous 24 months.

If you want to fly a multi-engine aircraft, the flight review needs to have been done in a multi-engine aircraft of the same category.

If you are carrying passengers, you also need to meet the recent experience requirements of three takeoffs and landings within the previous 90 days.

As a commercial pilot you can be subject to operator proficiency checks as well.

For more details refer to the following CASA information sheets: **Aircraft ratings**, **Aircraft class ratings**, **Aircraft type ratings**, **Flight reviews** and **Proficiency checks**.



Want to know more?

Visit the [licensing regulations](#) section.

The new rules for commercial pilot licences are contained in Part 61 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations:

- › **Subpart 61.E**—general limitations
- › **Subpart 61.J**—commercial pilot licences
- › **Regulation 61.570**—privileges of commercial pilot licences
- › **Regulation 61.575**—limitations on exercising privileges: multi-crew operations
- › **Regulation 61.580**—requirements for grant of commercial pilot licences: general
- › **Division 61.I.2**—aeronautical experience requirements (pilots who have completed an integrated training course)
- › **Division 61.I.3**—aeronautical experience requirements (pilots who have not completed an integrated training course).

