



Airfreddy's Flying Stories

Stories That *All Pilots* Can Learn From

Story #3 I Wasn't Qualified To Sign off a Student

Back in about 1994 when I was flight instructing I had a student come to me and ask me to finish his flight training and that he was ready to take the flight test. I went up with him and did an evaluation flight and he was ready for the flight test. So I called up the pilot examiner and scheduled the flight test a few days later. I did a few hours of ground with the student and then signed him off for his flight test.

Flight test day the student was there early. We double checked the paper work and waited for the examiner to show up. The examiner showed up and started to go thru the paperwork and the student's logbook. I was out in the office getting some coffee or something when I hear the door open up and the examiner comes out. "Fred we have a problem here" I went into the room thinking it was some standard FAA paperwork mistake.

The examiner looked at me and said "You are not qualified to sign this student off" I had a puzzled look on my face and wondered what was going on. This examiner, by the way, I knew pretty well so I knew he wasn't out to get me or my student. As most examiners do when there is a problem they will make the instructor pull out the regulations and read them.

So I read the regulations in part 61 and didn't find anything wrong at all except that I didn't pay attention to the word Competent. The examiner pointed out to me that how can I sign off someone as competent at something when I never went over

it with the student in the airplane. At that point in time I was younger (I think I was 29)I had been flight instructing for a while but still I had an answer like "he flew fine the other day"

The examiner looked at me and said you never flew with the student at night and you never gave the student any cross country instruction. My answer back at that time was "So I think he is ready for the flight test" The point was, I never checked the student in every area of operation that was listed in the qualifications for private pilots. So the examiner walked out and the student was not very happy.

So you as the student need to make sure your instructor logged everything that is listed in the regulations. That means you have to do everything on that list with your instructor. So you may think that you are ready for your flight test but if you switch instructors at this time in your training it is going to cost you.

If you insist on switching flight instructors make sure you do it before you solo or at least around that time frame. Don't go thru all the required training and then switch. It will cost you!



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