

10/03/2023

Content:

1. To notify those concerned with conducting FI (R) M courses of a change.
2. A reminder from Aaron.

1. FI (R) M Course Entry Requirements, Important Change

There have been requests from SEP/ non microlight pilots for a dispensation from one of the pre entry requirements for a FI (R) M course - the minimum PIC hours on microlights.

The relevant requirement in CAP 804 and our I & E Guide states:

‘..... completed 100 hours as PIC in any category of aircraft of which at least 40 hours must be on Microlights’.

The last time this was reviewed the recommended minimum PIC microlight hours was reduced from 60 to 40 hours. Since then we have heavier, higher performance three axis microlights and they are becoming more like light aircraft to handle. These are the type of microlights most SEP pilots want to instruct on, not the older, classic microlights.

These days more and more pilots, and instructors, do not own their own microlight. They hire. It is now probably cheaper for a SEP pilot to obtain a SEP FI than have to pay the extra to hire a microlight to get the 40 hours minimum on top of the FI (R) M course cost. Once a SEP FI they can just do differences training, maybe only an hour on a microlight, and then legally teach on them, and SEP types as well.

This does not really help to encourage them to become more experienced with microlights and our industry.

Regardless of how many PIC microlight hours anyone has prior to course start, they must still be competent to pass a pre entry flight test, on a microlight, before starting the course. The minimum is only a minimum, it may well take many more hours before being of a satisfactory standard.

So, the Panel concluded that the PIC microlight hours could be reduced to a minimum of **5 hours** PIC on microlights before starting a FI (R) M course. This would not change the total required PIC hours of 100, only the minimum on a microlight.

This would also align with our required 5 hours minimum PIC on the control type to be used on the FI (R) M course and for the Instructor Additional Control Type test.

The CAA have agreed with the Panel and therefore from now on FIC schools can accept an individual on a FI (R) M course with only a minimum of 5 hours PIC on microlights instead of the 40 hours minimum stated in CAP 804 and our I & E Guide, providing they comply with all the other pre course requirements.

A Guide amendment will be issued when it can, in the meantime this Instructor Bulletin informs of this change in Section 7.1, 7.4 and 8.5 regarding the minimum PIC microlight hours required prior to FI (R) M course start.

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2. Note from Aaron:

Microlight Class Rating and Instructor Certificate Validity Periods

Since the validity period of the Instructor Certificate was extended from 2 to 3 years it no longer aligns, for some Instructors, with the expiry date of their NPPL M rating.

This has caused irregularities with some who were accustomed to revalidating their Microlight Class Rating at the same time as their Instructor Certificate.

Aaron says please do check yours!

Equinox soon, longer days and better weather.

Happy flying,

Fiona Luckhurst

Chair Panel of Examiners.