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Pacific Soaring Council, Inc.

A non-profit volunteer organization serving glider pilots in Northern California and Nevada

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Experimental Category Aircraft Inspection by FAA - 2010 -

To: All PASCO Members

From: PASCO Board - March, 2010

Re: Experimental Category Aircraft Inspection by FAA

Dear PASCO Member:

It has come to our attention that the FAA is increasing its oversight of experimental category aircraft. We understand this is being conducted through a physical inspection (via "ramp check") of each aircraft. It is not clear at this time whether this effort represents a one-time review or whether owners of experimental category aircraft can expect periodic inspections. PASCO recommends that all owners and operators of experimental category aircraft review their aircraft to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

Gliders licensed under the experimental category typically fall under one of two sub-categories: "Exhibition and Racing" or "Amateur Built". Specifically, the Exhibition and Racing category is used when importing a foreign production aircraft that does not have a standard type certification from the FAA (e.g. normal, utility or acrobatic). All such aircraft are required to have a current "Program Letter" on file with the FAA FSDO which contains the glider owners home address (not the location where the glider is based). The Program Letter needs to be submitted annually.

All owners and operators of experimental category aircraft should be knowledgeable of the specific operating limitations which apply to their aircraft and should review their aircraft documentation to ensure compliance with applicable FAA notification requirements.

In addition, PASCO reminds owners and operators of all gliders that an FAA ramp inspection might reasonably encompass a review of the following:

- - Current pilot certificate
- - Acceptable photo identification
- - Radio station license and individual operating permit (when communicating outside of the United States – not

required for domestic operations)

- - Airworthiness certificate
- - Registration
- - Current chart(s)
- - Required placards and/or manuals

Sincerely,

Pacific Soaring Council

Here is a link to a sample FAA letter that has been used many times.

Sample-FAA-Program-Letter-for-Experimental-Aircraft

[Word document format](#)

[Adobe Reader PDF format](#)

Be sure to keep a copy of the letter with your glider documents.