



February 2026 Edition

The Airman Testing Community Advisory (ATCA) is produced by the General Aviation and Commercial Division, Training and Certification Group, Testing Standards Section (TSS), which is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) office responsible for practical test and airman certification standards, certification testing programs, and supporting reference materials. The purpose of this is to provide an additional method of change management communication to our stakeholders and support efforts to ensure training and testing remain correlated for an effective certification process.

Stakeholder Communications

You are encouraged to submit questions and comments regarding our products and services. Please note that we have a new email address for feedback: TestingStandardsComments@faa.gov. This new email address replaced the previous afs630comments@faa.gov email address.

Please continue to email comments related to Practical Test Standards (PTS) and Airman Certification Standards (ACS) to acsptsinquiries@faa.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The latest version of the Testing Standards Section Frequently Asked Questions document is available at this link: [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Standards

Sport Pilot Practical Test Standards (PTS)

FAA-S-8081-29A, Sport Pilot and Flight Instructors with a Sport Pilot Rating PTS for Airplane Category, Rotorcraft Category Gyroplane, and Glider Category; FAA-S-8081-30A, Sport Pilot and Flight Instructors with a Sport Pilot Rating PTS for Lighter-Than-Air Category; and FAA-S-8081-31A, Sport Pilot and Flight Instructors with a Sport Pilot Rating PTS for Powered Parachute Category and Weight-Shift-Control Aircraft Category are in the process of being revised to harmonize with Modernization of Special Airworthiness Certificate (MOSAIC) and will be posted to our website as soon as possible after **October 22, 2025**.

It is the expectation that Evaluators, Instructors, and Applicants comply with changes to Title 14 CFR chapter 1, subchapter D, part 61, effective October 22, 2025, regardless of the Sport Pilot and Flight Instructors with a Sport Pilot Rating PTS version being used.

Evaluators, instructors, and applicants can continue to use FAA-S-8081-29A, FAA-S-8081-30A, and FAA-S-8081-31A until the updated versions, FAA-S-8081-29B, FAA-S-8081-30B, and FAA-S-8081-31B, become effective. However, they must replace any outdated standards and information in the "A" versions with the most current standards and information from the new rule, which takes effect on October 22, 2025.

Reference Materials

The TSS continually evaluates our internal processes for developing, revising, and maintaining reference materials to ensure programmatic efficiencies and increased agility in keeping pace with advancements in aviation safety and technologies.

FAA-H-8083-4, Helicopter Instructor's Handbook

The FAA determined that FAA-H-8083-4, *Helicopter Instructor's Handbook*, published in 2012, is no longer necessary. The content of this handbook is entirely redundant, as the same concepts are already contained in FAA-H-8083-21B, *Helicopter Flying Handbook*, published in 2019. FAA-H-8083-21B is the primary source used by certified flight instructors (CFI) and students for teaching and learning helicopter ground and flight concepts.

Three Airman Knowledge Test Questions (AKTQ) currently reference FAA-H-8083-4. One question was revised and assigned a different reference. The remaining two questions were unchanged, with the FAA-H-8083-4 reference replaced by another valid reference. These changes will take effect on April 27, 2026, as part of the quarterly cycle update.

Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT)

Designated Mechanic Examiner (DME) Participation Request

The FAA is requesting voluntary input from active DMEs to support ongoing improvements to Aviation Mechanic practical test projects and practical questions. This effort will begin with the Aviation Mechanic General (AMG) test and expand to the Airframe (AMA) and Powerplant (AMP) tests over time.

DMEs interested in contributing real-world maintenance expertise to improve the practical test should contact the TSS Airworthiness team at 9-AVS-Mechanic-Test-Generator@faa.gov.

Practical Test Banks Updates

- Practical Test Banks:
 - Aviation Mechanic General (AMG) - Changes will be active in April 2026.
 - Aviation Mechanic Airframe (AMA) - In the review process.
 - Aviation Mechanic Powerplant (AMP) - Scheduled to begin reviewing in March 2026.

Minimum Tools and Equipment List (MTEL) Updates

When revisions to the MTEL require DMEs to obtain new or additional tools, equipment, or materials, prior notification will be distributed to Designees through this advisory and the Designee Management System (DMS). The current MTEL can be found in FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 5, Chapter 5, Section 11. DMEs may provide MTEL feedback to 9-AWA-AFS-300-Correspondence@faa.gov.

DMEs should obtain the following additional tools, equipment, or materials to comply with the upcoming MTEL revisions. Each item lists a target date for inclusion in the MTEL.

- Liquid Penetrant Kit to conduct non-destructive testing (June 1, 2026) AM.I.K.S5

Airman Knowledge Testing

Airman Knowledge Test Questions (AKTQ) are continuously monitored for accuracy and performance and rigorously reviewed during regularly scheduled exam board meetings to ensure spelling and grammatical correctness, clarity, consistency in terminology, structure, and formatting, and alignment of content with FAA regulations, testing and certification standards, and reference materials and figures. Although the FAA does not provide sample questions or share active question content with stakeholders, information on new content, content no longer tested, and terminology changes is posted in the ATCA.

Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) Knowledge Exams

The FAA's Airman Certificate Testing Service (ACTS) Contract requires PSI to assess FAA airman knowledge tests to ensure they are in accordance with current standards for educational and psychological testing. In collaboration with the FAA and partners in the Aviation industry, PSI has initiated the preliminary stages of the assessment for the Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) knowledge tests. This process does not result in any changes to test question content, and all questions will continue to align with the applicable ACS codes and references. The assessment is anticipated to be completed later this year.

Graphics Conversion Project Update

In collaboration with PSI Services, LLC, the FAA is enhancing its airman knowledge testing system by embedding figures directly into test questions and moving away from reliance on printed supplementary material. This update aims to offer applicants a more comprehensive and modern testing experience.

The following exams feature questions with embedded images:

- Commercial Pilot
- Private Pilot
- Sport Pilot
- Unmanned Aircraft

Effective April 2026, the following exams will feature questions with embedded images:

- Instrument Rating
- Aviation Maintenance Technician (General, Airframe, and Powerplant)
- Parachute Rigger
- Flight Engineer

Applicants preparing for FAA exams are encouraged to regularly visit the PSI True Talent site to access sample test questions and become familiar with the new format.

Candidate Information Bulletins (CIB)

CIBs contain valuable information for test candidates, including information on examination registration and scheduling procedures, reporting to the examination site, test authorization and reauthorization requirements, and test content specifications.

Below are links to exams with available CIBs. This list will be updated as PSI Services, LLC, and the FAA finalize evaluations of additional exams.

- [Airline Transport Pilot Multiengine \(ATM\)/Airline Transport Pilot Single Engine Airplane \(ATS\)](#)
- [Commercial Pilot Airplane \(CAX\)](#)
- [Commercial Pilot Helicopter \(CRH\)](#)
- [Instrument Rating Airplane \(IRA\)](#)
- [Instrument Rating Helicopter \(IRH\)](#)
- [Private Pilot Airplane \(PAR\)](#)
- [Private Pilot Helicopter](#)
- [Unmanned Aircraft General \(UAG\)](#)

Learning Statement Codes

The current version of the Learning Statement Reference Guide for Airman Knowledge Testing is available at this link: [Learning Statement Codes](#).

ACS Codes

Of the **91** FAA airman knowledge tests offered, **33** now have ACS codes displayed on the corresponding Airman Knowledge Test Reports (AKTR). The light blue shading of the test code indicates these tests in the [FAA Airman Knowledge Testing Matrix](#).

Matrix

The latest version of the Airman Knowledge Testing Matrix is available at this link: [FAA Airman Knowledge Testing Matrix](#).

Statistics

Airman Knowledge Tests Statistics

The CY 2025, Airman Knowledge Test Statistics, and Test Volume Chart are available at this link: [Airman Knowledge Test Statistics](#).

Frequently Missed Knowledge Test ACS Codes

The Frequently Missed Knowledge Test ACS Codes Report is located on the [Airman Knowledge Test Statistics Webpage](#). This report is based on data contained in the Safety Performance and Analysis System (SPAS), for the specified timeframe, includes data for ACS codes administered at least 100 times, and displays ACS Codes missed more than 70% of the time on specific knowledge tests.