

ABF Pilot Training Manual

Part 1

Introduction

and

Student and Instructor Notes

Version 1 – JUNE 2006

IMPORTANT

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Introduction

The aim of this manual

The ABF Pilot Training Manual is a project of the Australian Ballooning Federation Operations Team. Since it began it has received outstanding support from the ABF Executive, committee, staff and members.

The manual is intended as a primary training document for private balloon pilots in Australia. It contains the syllabuses and essential study materials for the ABF Private Pilot Certificate – theory and practical requirements, and further reading.

The manual will also be an ongoing resource to help all pilots to keep current.

Thank you – now and in the future

A special ‘thank you’ to the many ABF members, CASA and Bureau of Meteorology staff and others who have assisted in this project, especially Ian Hogben, Jim Hanigan, Alan Cameron, Alan Shore, Mike Cleaver, David Chadbourne and Don Whitford; Don Cameron of Cameron Balloons UK and David Robson of the Aviation Theory Centre in Melbourne for permission to use illustrations from their excellent textbooks; and all the students, instructors and examiners who provided feedback on the two draft versions, especially at ‘The Lake’ training weeks near Mildura in 2002 and 2005.

From time to time throughout the manual you will see the text boxes below. By keeping up to date yourself – and giving your feedback to improve the manual for others – you will ensure that Australian balloon pilots are ‘up there’ among the best in the world.

Wishing you all safe and enjoyable ballooning!

Simon Fisher
ABF Training Officer
June 2006

ARE YOU UP TO DATE?

*New regulations and procedures may apply from time to time.
Check on the ABF website that you have the latest version of these study notes.*

YOUR FEEDBACK PLEASE!

*If you have any corrections or suggested improvements to these study notes
please advise the ABF Operations Manager.*

Student and Instructor Notes

TO THE STUDENT

Getting started

Section III of the ABF Operations Manual lists the privileges of a student pilot and what you need to do to qualify as a private pilot. It is up to you to make the process happen. While balloons are essentially simple aircraft, there is a lot more to ballooning than is obvious at first. If you are going to be a good pilot you will go on learning as long as you continue flying.

Practical flying training

Can be negotiated with ABF Instructors. If you do not have a balloon to train in, you may be able to hire or borrow one. It is best to do several flights close together before any long break. After a single isolated flight you are likely to forget what you have learned and the next flight will be mostly revision. You can maintain and improve your skills by flying with pilots who are not instructors, however this will not count towards your required instruction hours. The same applies if an Instructor is not current – it is prudent to ask the Instructor to show you (in his pilot logbook) that he has passed an Instructor check by an Examiner within the previous two years.

Ground crew experience

Is highly recommended, both before and during your flight training. It is an opportunity to (at no cost): familiarise with rigging, handling and refuelling balloons; learn about flight decisions in relation to weather, terrain and airspace; get to know other balloonists, and have a lot of fun. Make sure you do each crew job at times to know what's involved. Students sometimes arrange instruction in return for crewing.

Theory exams

Should be completed early in your training rather than later. That way you will understand more and can apply what you learn as you come to do the flight training. At the very least you should refer to the relevant theory section soon after doing a related flight exercise, in order to reinforce the learning. Use the notes in this manual to study at home, and ask lots of questions to check you have understood. Don't hesitate to contact an ABF Examiner and sit the exams – if you don't pass first time, you may sit an alternate paper after you have revised any weak areas.

TO THE INSTRUCTOR**Keeping your instructor skills current**

When was your last instructional flight? Remember you need to be a good instructor as well as a good pilot – it's a separate skill! Read your ABF Instructor Manual again to remind yourself of some do's and don'ts, so you and your student both get the most out of your time together.

Supporting the student

If you don't know the answer to a student's question, suggest a suitable source, then follow up to make sure an answer is found and agreed between you. Follow the student's progress with theory study and exams: suggest, encourage, and tutor when appropriate.

What order to do the flying exercises

Balloon flights are subject to factors like weather and terrain, so flying training seldom follows a strict sequence. Be flexible and make the most of the opportunities whenever you fly, keeping in mind the exercises you would like to achieve. Tethered flight (exercise 3i) can be useful right at the start of training or on a foggy morning. On a non-flying day, there are many exercises which can be discussed, demonstrated and (in some cases) practised while still on the ground, including all or part of: section 1, 2a to 2e, 4a to 4d, sections 5, 6 and 7.

To help flying training progress

- Fly in open country whenever possible, to practice low level flying and landings
- Low level flying builds confidence, understanding of the balloon's movement and anticipation of when to use controls
- Give a running commentary of what you are seeing, thinking and doing when you are at the controls, and get the student to do the same.
- Avoid over-use of instruments – it is important for the student to learn to fly without them, especially when close to the ground,

Competent standard

Only tick the student as competent for a particular flight exercise when he has achieved the competent standard listed in Section 10 of this manual.

TO THE INSTRUCTOR *and* THE STUDENT**Talk to each other**

'Aviate – Navigate – Communicate' are the usual flight priorities, but when training you should be communicating with each other all the time!

Do your preparations

- Check the balloon, equipment, vehicle, crew, weather, airspace in advance, usually by the night before a flight
- Discuss what exercises to do next (refer to recent flights in the Student Training Record)
- Avoid arranging a training flight a few minutes beforehand on the launch field!

Be disciplined

- Check logbooks (student and balloon), flight manual, and NOTAM
- Plan each flight together using the map and weather information
- Debrief and fill in the Student Training Record and logbooks together promptly after flying
- Give any weak areas extra effort and attention – don't turn a blind eye to them.

Questions or problems

If you need more help, you are welcome to ask the ABF Operations Manager or the Training Officer.

YOUR FEEDBACK PLEASE!

*If you have any corrections or suggested improvements to these study notes
please advise the ABF Operations Manager*