



# FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS

**FIP/DGCA/21 - 13**

**30<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

To,  
Shri Arun Kumar, IAS  
Director General of Civil Aviation  
Office of Director General of Civil Aviation,  
Aurobindo Marg, opp. Safdarjung Airport,  
New Delhi, Delhi 110003

**SUB: Comments / objections to draft amendments to the Aircraft Rules 1937 published in the extraordinary gazette on Sept 30th 2021.**

Dear Sir,

With reference to the draft amendments to the Aircraft Rule no 1937 as published in the extraordinary gazette on Sept 30th 2021, we submit our comments as under:

Refer Amendment to Rule 42 Para J (ii) page 18: The proposed changes stating "in case where the privileges of the license have not been exercised during the validity period of the license, for a period exceeding 03 years, the applicant shall be required to re qualify in examinations and skill tests required for the issue of such a license", needs reconsideration.

The various categories of pilots affected are as follows: -

1) Fresh CPL and experienced ATPL holders who have been rendered jobless since the beginning of the pandemic (currently numbering 6000+ pilots). Sir, you are well aware that the cost of initial training including type rating is almost 90 lakhs - 1 CR today. Most pilots have taken huge educational loans and many have been left high and dry after paying their training fees when their flying schools/ airlines declared bankruptcy. Now the very license that cost them 1CR will become invalid, they are stuck paying the EMI's but unable to use this invalid license to secure a job.

2) Pilots presently employed but unable to fly due to temporary medical unfitness.

3) Pilots holding Indian license but flying abroad on licenses of non-contracting states.

4) Pilots who have been suspended from exercising their license by DGCA post incident/accident investigation.

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5) This rule is especially discriminatory to women pilots and puts their license in an extremely vulnerable position as they are unable to fly once pregnant till they finish their cooling period post delivery.

6) Ex-Indian armed forces pilots who have their ATPL's but are not actively flying at present. This will put a huge hurdle in their re-entry into civil life after completing their tenure in service of the nation. There are also active duty pilots possessing Civil ATPLs who will retire in future and be unable to resettle.

All these pilots will be required to go back to flight/ground training establishments every 03 years at a tremendous cost whilst already being burdened by high educational loans and drawing no salary. When a pilot is issued any license by DGCA it is evident that he/she has the requisite knowledge and skill level for exercising the privileges of the said license. A break in flying doesn't wipe out your knowledge and reset your skill set to zero. A decrease in skill set due to a gap in flying is already addressed by existing recency training requirements. An engineer, doctor or any other professional who does not practise his profession for a certain period, is not required to go to the first year of college and pass all his exams! It is an unimaginable thought that all his knowledge would lapse and his B.E / MBBS qualification would become invalid.

Refer Amendment to Rule 39C Para F (1) page 16: We welcome the extension of the validity of pilot licenses to 10 years, this greatly reduces the renewal workload/paperwork and is a step in the right direction. However, we would like to draw your attention to the rules in place in other countries so that we may adopt the best industry practices.

FAA: CFR 61.19 (c) Pilot certificates are issued without any expiry date i.e Lifetime Validity.

EASA Part FCL Lifetime Validity

CAA UK: with the 2012 amendment to the Air Navigation Order all UK licenses are issued with Lifetime Validity.

CAA NZ Part 61.15: issued for the lifetime of the holder

FAA/EASA/GCAA/CAA UK/CAA NZ/JCAB have NO regulations which invalidate a pilot license due to non-flying.

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No other Civil Aviation Authority has instituted a requirement to re qualify in examinations and skill tests in case of non-flying. This is a retrograde move which will greatly affect the already depressed aviation sector further by making perfectly employable pilots unavailable.

In conclusion, there is a clear distinction between 'validity' of a license and 'proficiency' of a license holder. As F.I.P. (Federation of Indian Pilots), an organisation of over 5000 professional pilots across the spectrum of civil aviation operations, we suggest that pilot licenses once issued, should be valid for the holder's lifetime which can only be revoked in extreme situations by the licensing authority. After a long gap of non-flying, the Pilots 'proficiency' requirements can be addressed through refresher training and route checks. However, in no case should this extend to repeating any examinations / skill checks, which were required for initial issue of the said license.

May we request you to grant us an opportunity to further discuss the subject issue in greater detail so that the objective of promulgating an effective and progressive regulatory policy is achieved.

Thanking you

Yours faithfully

Capt. Surinder Mehta  
President – Federation of Indian Pilots