

Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations



Talking Points: ATP Minimum Requirements

The Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations recommends the Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) License as the minimum standard for employment as a pilot with a Part 121 or 135 air carrier. The ATP provides the academic coursework, flight training and experience needed for the safe piloting of today's complex, high-speed aircraft through a congested, multifaceted air traffic control network in difficult weather environments. Mainline air carriers require the ATP for employment and "one level of safety" dictates that all air carriers, regional or otherwise, should require the ATP as well. The 1500 flight hours that the ATP requires develops a mature, experienced and professional aviator who has the foundation to exercise prudent judgment while responsible for the safe transportation of tens or even hundreds of passengers.

- Entry-level First Officers have immediate flying duties and are as responsible as Captains for the safe operation of the aircraft;
- ATP requires 500 cross-country flight hours, 400 night hours;
- ATP check ride is tailored to commercial operations at large airports;
- Achieving the ATP requires more check rides and generates more performance documentation;
- 1500 hours develops better airmanship skills;
- Spatial orientation, physiological factors and situational awareness are finely honed with more flight time;
- Commercial pilot (only) licensed aviators account for 3x the accidents as ATP licensed pilots;
- 50% of US domestic flights are flown by Regional Carriers;
- "Quantity" of flight hours have a "Quality" of their own.

The current minimum hiring requirement for US commercial part 121 and 135 operators is 250 flight hours, a commercial pilot license and an instrument rating. These basic qualifications can be attained in 12 months for about \$25,000. The responsibility of 50, 70 or 100 passengers and their safe passage through the congested air traffic control system in challenging atmospheric conditions should not be charged to a pilot with so little flight time and qualification. A doctor who is responsible for one life at a time must complete undergraduate study, medical school, residency and pass board certified exams before practicing as a doctor. Part 121 pilots should be required to have similar extensive training and qualifications.

CAPA's Position: CAPA supports the ATP minimum requirement for all part 121 and 135 pilots employed by US commercial operators to possess an Airline Transport Pilot license.

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