

Federal Aviation Agency



DEPARTMENT OF
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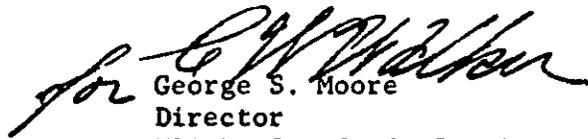
SUBJECT : USE OF RESTRICTED ~~CATEGORY AIRPLANES~~ FOR GLIDER TOWING

1. **PURPOSE:** This circular is to announce that glider towing is now considered to be a special purpose for type and airworthiness certification in the restricted category.
2. **REGULATIONS AFFECTED.**
 - a. FAR 21, Subpart E, Sections 21.25 and 21.185
 - b. FAR 61, Section 61.101
 - c. FAR 91, Sections 91.17 and 91.39
3. **BACKGROUND.** In the past, restricted category airplanes were not certificated to be used for glider towing. However, the service record and performance data of restricted category aircraft indicate that many of these aircraft may have desirable characteristics as glider towing airplanes. It has been determined that safety will not be jeopardized if restricted category airplanes are used for glider towing after meeting appropriate certification requirements when operated under prescribed limitations.
4. **GUIDANCE.**
 - a. Persons desiring type certification or supplemental type certification of airplanes in the restricted category for the special purpose of glider towing should contact the nearest FAA Flight Standards District Office. Approval of the modifications to facilitate towing should be obtained in accordance with standard procedures for approval of modifications and alterations in connection with the supplemental type certificate.
 - b. Airplane performance when towing a glider is dependent upon the density altitude, weight, and L/D (glide ratio) characteristics of the specific towed glider. With respect to airplanes that had been type certificated in a standard category, it is considered

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acceptable, generally, if the airplane, while towing a glider, has approximately one half the rate of climb required for its standard category certification.

5. Limitations. Operators of restricted category tow planes are subject to FAR, Section 91.39. Under that section, glider towing constitutes a special purpose operation. The towing of the glider and its pilot for a fee is not considered to be the carrying of persons or property for compensation or hire within the meaning of section 91.39(b). Nor is it a carrying for compensation or hire within the applicability of FAR Part 135. However, it is a carrying for compensation or hire within the meaning of FAR Section 61.101(a)(1) to the extent that, unless it is incidental to his business or employment, a private pilot cannot act as pilot in command of the tow plane.


George S. Moore
Director
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