



PIRATE FLYER

Leadership & Command | One Sky, One Standard | AC 121-42/43

HU Captain's Culture

THE SAFETY TRAIL

Trust - Safe, Valued, Respect
Report - Proactive, Accessible
Adapt - Flexible, Innovative
Inform - Sharing, Transparent
Learn - Share Safety Intel

Know Your Code

LCM — leadership, command & mentoring: every role, not just the cockpit

AC 121-42 — Leadership & Command (Pilot in Command)

AC 121-43 — Mentoring (Pilot in Command)

PL 111-216 §206 — the mandate, post-Colgan 3407

<100-hr CFI — a high-minimums captain

"The law names airmanship and professionalism — but never defines them. That job is ours."

Safety Reporting



Leadership Is a Required Item

Leadership, command, and mentoring (LCM) are not soft skills — and they are not only cockpit skills. Every position in the system runs on them: the tower, the ramp, the maintenance floor, the flight deck, the ground control station.

After the loss of Colgan Air 3407, Congress passed the Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Extension Act of 2010, Public Law (PL) 111-216. Section 206 directed training for mentoring, leadership, command, and professional development. The FAA answered with two Advisory Circulars (AC): **AC 121-42** and **AC 121-43**. They codified LCM for the cockpit — but the discipline runs across the whole system.

Command — AC 121-42

AC 121-42, *Leadership and Command Training for Pilots in Command*, codified command for the flight deck — crew resource management (CRM) was never built to teach it. But command is not only a cockpit word: a controller commands a sector, an airport leader the field, a maintenance lead the floor, a pilot in command (PIC) the flight. **Command owns the system; the team accepts the risk** — whoever holds it sets the tone.

Key Command Skills

- Command authority paired with command responsibility — you own the outcome
- Decision-making under time pressure and ambiguity
- Assertiveness that invites challenge, not silence
- Setting professional standards and expectations early
- Delegating the task while retaining responsibility

Best Practice Controls

- Brief your leadership style, not just the route
- Invite challenge — honor the two-challenge rule and PACE
- Debrief command decisions, not only maneuvers
- Green-on-green is a no-go — pair green with seasoned

Mentoring — AC 121-43

AC 121-43, *Mentoring Training for Pilots in Command*, makes experienced captains deliberate teachers of airmanship and professionalism. Compliance became mandatory on **April 27, 2022** — but mentoring is a whole-system duty: controllers mentor developmentals, maintenance leads mentor apprentices, veterans mentor the newest hand. The idea is older than the rule: **no lost sheep**.

Key Mentoring Moves

- Model the standard — then name it out loud
- Close the gap between *information* and *formation*: presence, not just data
- Expand the crew — the newest hand may hold the answer

Best Practice Controls

- Schedule mentoring; debrief professionalism, not just performance
- Make dissent safe — reward the challenge even when you were right
- Wind your watch — slow is fast when you are teaching

One Sky — Raise the Bar

The sky is shared — and so is the standard. Pilots, air traffic control (ATC), airport administration, and uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) operators run one system together, in the same airspace and the same airports. A midair does not check certificates. As we grow general aviation, the way to cut the chance of a collision is to **raise the bar for the whole system** — to the same leadership, command, and mentoring standards the airlines were required to adopt.

And the system is getting more crowded — and less national. Commercial space launch and reentry now drop debris into it: in 2025, FAA Debris Response Areas from Starship breakups diverted airliners over the Caribbean and Atlantic, and one flight of 283 declared a Mayday to get clear. Below, small UAS (sUAS) are multiplying daily. More traffic, more actors, one sky.

Training the Next Generation

Here is the harder problem. A pilot's judgment has always been sharpened by a sense of mortality — the aircraft carries the crew. A UAS operator feels none of that, and many — first responders and law enforcement among them — can operate or monitor an aircraft on the barest qualification. Skill can be certified in an afternoon; the **valueset** cannot. The next generation will share the sky with operators who have no skin in the game. So we train the judgment the cockpit once enforced. We do not just build pilots — **we build aviators**.

The Cost of the Gap

General aviation claims on the order of **300 lives a year** in the United States — roughly **a regional jet's worth of passengers and crew every quarter**. In the air carrier world, losing a full CRJ or Embraer every three months would be intolerable. And this is U.S. general aviation alone. We fly the same sky; we owe it the same standard.

Source: National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), U.S. GA fatalities; FAA 2025 Debris Response Area diversions.

One standard, from first solo on — every PIC, every intern and co-op, every summer job on the ramp, every UAS operation, recreational or commercial.