



November 4, 2016

Statement from the University Aviation Association Regarding Recent Veterans Administration (VA) Actions to Rescind VA Certification of Flight Training Programs in the U.S.

Over the past year, many University Aviation Association (UAA) member institutions with flight training programs have had what appears to be inconsistent reviews from Veterans Administration (VA) regional offices in regards to implementation of a new institutions of higher learning (IHL) policy (Compliance and Liaison Advisory 223-15-01) with respect to VA certification of institutional flight training programs. The UAA has learned that some of our member institutions have retained their VA approval, while other institutions have been informed their VA approval has been rescinded. This difference between programs of similar structures makes little sense to program administrators and veterans. The inconsistent review of approvals and now possible loss of VA certification for IHL flight training programs has placed veterans enrolled in these programs in a position of losing funding for their Flight Degrees. This is occurring at a critical time in which airlines are experiencing a severe labor shortage. Furthermore, these institutions are concerned about future enrollments and viability of flight education programs for veterans.

The more than 100 UAA member institutions are recognized by regional airlines and the FAA as providing top-quality flight training in the U.S. The UAA places complete confidence in the integrity and stewardship of flight training education by our respective member institutions, who are subject to both institutional and federal (FAA) oversight.

Therefore, the UAA respectfully encourages the VA to consider:

- 1) Immediately reversing any removal of certification of institutional programs which have been found compliant by respective State Approving Agencies (SAAs) and allow currently enrolled veterans to continue to fly within these programs, or at least allow through next summer term (August 2017). This will reduce the current stress being experienced by veterans enrolled in these flight programs.
- 2) Holding a combined meeting with the VA, appropriate FAA offices, select industry employers, and the UAA to discuss how to best meet the intent of the VA, while also serving the flight training needs of veterans.
- 3) Acknowledge that flight training is proficiency-based, and it is very difficult to establish a finite number of hours that would apply to all flight training students. Each student has the opportunity to complete said courses with the published FAA Training Course Outline (TCO) flight and ground hours and institutions have oversight policies which treat all students (veteran or otherwise) equitably and fairly if they cannot finish a requisite course by the end of a semester.

The UAA believes in a collaborative approach to resolving these issues and has a vested interest in ensuring high-quality flight training for all students, veterans and non-veterans. UAA member institutions are in need of specific national guidance on this VA policy affecting IHLs with flight training.