

THE RITE FLYER

MARTIN AIRFIELD

How Important is Your Little Red Beacon Light?

Coming Up ...

Meeting :

Monday , July 11th, 7:00 p.m. General Meeting at Martin Field

Program:

Board of Directors

July 9th, 7:00 pm

Next Meeting:

August 8, 2022, 7:00 p.m. at Martin Field.

Chapter Website:

chapters.eaa.org/ea604

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We’ve all had it happen. We’re ready to fly but find that silly little red beacon light is inoperative. Now what? Is it really possible that a plane worth tens of thousands of dollars and in otherwise perfect working order is not airworthy because of a single light bulb?

To find an answer to this quandary, I looked to the Internet. Since I know that everything on the Internet is checked out and guaranteed to be true, I delved into my search with confidence. Alas, it didn’t take long before I found myself disappointed and disillusioned. Many people were asking the same question, but the answers were very different: “NO”, “YES”, “Only if its daytime”, “Yes, if you have wing tip strobes on”, and my favorite, “Go ahead and fly and just say it must’ve burned out during the flight.”

Well, since the Internet let me down, I decided to take a look at the FARs to see what they have to say. Here’s what I found:

FAR 91.205 (b)(11) Instrument and equipment requirements, Day

For small civil airplanes certificated after March 11, 1996, in accordance with part 23 of this chapter, an approved aviation red or aviation white anti-collision light system. In the event of failure of any light of the anti-collision light system, operation of the aircraft may continue to a location where repairs or replacement can be made.

FAR 91.205 (c)(3) Instrument and equipment requirements, Night

An approved aviation red or aviation white anti-collision light system on all U.S.-registered civil aircraft. Anti-collision light systems initially installed after August 11, 1971, on aircraft for which a type certificate was issued or applied for before August 11, 1971, must at least meet the anti-collision light standards of part 23, 25, 27, or 29 of this chapter, as applicable, that were in effect on August 10, 1971, except that the color may be either aviation red or aviation white. In the event of failure of any light of the anti-collision light system, operations with the aircraft may be continued to a stop where repairs or

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Calendar Items to share

Week Days	10:00 a.m. Coffee Club, Martin Field Pilot’s Lounge,
July 16	St Maries, ID, S72 Pancakes, hams, sausage, eggs and beverage of choice.- \$5.00
July 23	WPA Rosalia Fly-in and Poker Run with BBQ 8:00 am–3:30 pm (72S)
July 30	EAA 1639, Hermiston Or, Last Saturday Breakfast, 7:30-11:00 am \$5 donation
Aug 20	Payette Airport, S75 for breakfast! \$10 suggested donation for the cost of food.



Red Beacon Light *continued*

replacement can be made.

FAR 91.209(b) Aircraft Lights

No person may operate an aircraft that is equipped with an anti-collision light system, unless it has lighted anti-collision lights. However, the anti-collision lights need not be lighted when the pilot-in-command determines that, because of operating conditions, it would be in the interest of safety to turn the lights off.

So, if you have an aircraft certified after 3/11/96, it must have a red or white anti-collision light system. This can be a beacon on the tail or the white flashing strobes on the wing tips. Per this regulation, only one or the other is required. If you're flying at night, ALL aircraft are required to have one of the systems (or one that meets the early certification requirements).

Notice both paragraphs in 91.205 allow the plane to continue to be flown as long as you're taking it to a location where it can be repaired. I'm pretty sure this doesn't include a sightseeing trip around the countryside or 10 touch-and-gos in the pattern. Also notice that 91.209 **requires the lights to be turned on—both day and night**, unless you feel it's in the interest of safety to turn them off. Of course, you better have a sound reason to give the FAA as to why you felt it was safer to have them off.

However, here's the BIG question that has generated much debate on the aviation forums: **If you have both a red tail beacon and the white wing tip strobes, can one of them be inoperative?** To many people it seems obvious. Since there are many aircraft models that only have a red beacon, and there are many models that only have strobes, and the regulations only require one or the other be installed, it's reasonable to assume only one system needs to work. The problem with this answer is that it's *too rational*. It's the answer that seems most reasonable and sensible. However, reasonable, rational, and sensible are words that too often don't describe the FAA's answers.

I searched the FAA's "Regulations Division, Legal Interpretations & Chief Counsel's Opinions" website and found an interpretation that answered this exact question. It's dated Jan 11, 2011, and was written by Rebecca B. MacPherson, Assistant Chief Counsel for Regulations, AGC-200.

In her letter, she states:

"As an initial matter, it appears that the strobe light and the rotating beacon are part of the same anti-collision sys-

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Joseph Fly-in 2022



This year's Wallowa County Fly in and Airshow was as spectacular as past events. There were six airshow performers including a six plane formation flying team of RV-6 aircraft and a two plane formation team. One of the participants flew a Pitts and did stuff airplanes shouldn't do.

The weather was great for a casual flight from Walla Walla and even better for the airshow. Nonda and I made the 50 minute trip in our Cessna 172 and enjoyed a pancake breakfast and a stroll through the static displays.

Five airplane did STOL demonstrations before the airshow began. They were mostly Piper Super Cubs and a couple of Cessnas all with the oversized tires. The announcer said the tires have only 12 pounds of air in them. Impressive landing skills!



General Meeting June 13, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 by President Jim Edwards. The attendance was low so we opened discussion with the report of our Young Eagle event. It seemed that the weather may have kept some from attending the rally. Our total count was under 90 and we were finished by 3:00 pm with no problem. We had nine pilots part of the day so no one was overwhelmed with kids and there was plenty of time to take a break for water or lunch. President Jim made a point to thank everyone who helped with the Young Eagle Rally and especially our ground support crew who helped keep the flow going.

Susan gave a report on the monthly activity report for our Ray Scholarship recipient, Meredith. During this month she spent two weeks with the National Guard so she was only able to get 5.5 hours of flight time in. She also accumulated 12.5 hours of volunteer time. She is progressing well with her flight training and will be putting more time in to ground and flight training now that she has met her obligation with the National Guard.

We had a follow-up discussion on the Fly-Baby project plane. After last month's program on the Fly Baby and the evaluation of our project, it was recommended that we try to sell it rather than rebuild it. The airplane value is reasonable low because it is a single place airplane. Ours will need to be stripped and recovered in order to verify the condition of the wood structure. With the cost of an engine and the necessary work it will probably cost more to rebuild than we could get for it on the market. A motion was made and seconded to sell it as is. Don Gibbard will place an add on Barnstormers and see if we get any interest.

Projects: Jim Edwards gave an update on his project. He has finished the painting and will be buffing once the paint has cured. We had a discussion on the paperwork process and what the State and FAA require for registration and Airworthiness Certificate.

The Commemorative Air Force will bring their Flying Legends of Victory Tour back to Walla Walla July 25-31. EAA 604 will participate in the opening ceremony and we have also been invited to help Gorge Aviation with a Barbeque. More information will be available at the July meeting.

Don Gibbard,
Secretary

Volunteer Opportunities

I want to draw your attention to the Refreshment list to the right of this column. After this next meeting we do not have anyone signed up to bring refreshments. We need 4 more volunteers to complete the year. If you have not provided refreshments and would like to help, please email me at gibbdo@pocketinet.com or let me know at the July meeting.

We have been asked to help with the CAF Legends of Victory Tour when they arrive later this month. Gorge Aviation is hosting a barbeque and we have been asked to help. We will also be lending some of our equipment to the event. If you have some time and can help with the barbeque, please let Bill Herrington know. He will have more information on day and time at our next meeting and we will send out an email for those who are not able to attend the meeting.



2022 REFRESHMENTS

JANUARY	Bill Herrington
FEBRUARY	The Chlarsons
MARCH	Board
APRIL	Don Bais
MAY	Charlie Miller
JUNE	Matt Harris
JULY	Don Gibbard
AUGUST	
SEPTEMBER	
OCTOBER	
NOVEMBER	
DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS PARTY

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tem. The airworthiness standard that governs the need for an airplane to be equipped with an anti-collision light system, 14 C.F.R.23.1401(a)(1), states that 'the airplane must have an anti-collision system that ... consists of one or more approved anti-collision lights...' Because the strobe light and the rotating beacon are both approved anti-collision lights, under 23.1401(a)(1), they are part of the same anti-collision system."

"Moreover, because section 91.209(b) does not contain an exception for alternative sources of anti-collision lighting, turning on the anti-collision beacon would not relieve a pilot from the requirement to turn on the anti-collision strobe lights... However, 91.209(b) does give the PIC the discretion to turn off the anti-collision beacon and/or the anti-collision strobe light system if the PIC determines that it is in the interests of safety to turn off either one or both of these components of the same light system."

It seems clear that the FAA calls the beacon and strobes part of the **same system**—and a system that is required to be fully operational. This of course means that both beacon and strobe must be turned on by the pilot (unless he deems it unsafe for a particular situation). Based on this FAA interpretation, you may want to invest in a spare bulb for both your beacon and strobe lights. It's an investment that may someday keep you from being grounded because of one simple light bulb.

Note: If you have an aircraft certified after 3/11/96, it must have a red or white anti-collision light system. This can be a beacon on the tail or the white flashing strobes on the wing tips.

About the Author



Tom Ferguson

Tom Ferguson has been flying since 1980. He holds an Airframe and Power Plant License (A&P) as well as a Commercial Pilot's License from Moody Aviation. Tom also holds an Inspection Authorization (IA) and is a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) and has a degree in Software Development from Samford University.



THE B-17 FLYING FORTRESS SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY AND THE B-25 MITCHELL MAID IN THE SHADE WILL BE IN WALLA WALLA, WA JULY 25-31, 2022.

A one of a kind collection of the rarest historic military planes in the world will be near you. Come see them up close, and better yet **fly in one!**

Not everyone can visit the Airbase Arizona Museum for an up-close and personal inspection of our thrilling warbirds. So in the summer, we take our World War II planes to the public to fulfill our mission of educating generations about the role of aviation in combat history. The "Flying Legends of Victory Tour," starts in June and ends in October. Three of our flying warbirds travel to approximately 50 cities.

Keep your eyes to the skies when our C-47/DC-3 Combat Legend "Old Number 30," B-25 "Maid in the Shade," and B-17 "Sentimental Journey" fly overhead to their next destination. And come visit us when we're in your town. Rides and tours are available, but be sure to book your seat in advance because we'll only be there for a limited time.

Our summer tour is made possible by volunteer Commemorative Air Force members who attend ground school in the spring and give up anywhere from one to three weeks at a time of their summer and/or fall to go on location with our planes. These members put in long hours on-site, but they do so with smiles on their faces to bring history to others. They answer questions, coordinate rides, give tours of the aircraft and sell souvenirs, among other things. These volunteers have a passion for keeping history alive.