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United States Powered Paragliding Association (USPPA)

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To Whom It May Concern,

Pilots in our sport, powered paragliding, enjoy two valuable exemptions to FAR 103 that allow two-place training with Powered Paragliders,

USPPA #9751A (Docket FAA-2002-12476) and
ASC #9785A (Docket FAA-2001-10583).

These are indeed making our sport safer by allowing two-place training but we would like a clarification in order to insure we are operating within the law.

The applicability language says:

“3. All flights operating under this exemption must be for training purposes only. This exemption applies only to flights for the purpose of giving instruction in foot-launched, two-place powered paragliders.”

ASC has interpreted this to mean that, if the powered paraglider is foot launchable, it may have wheels, and it may take off and/or land using those wheels, legally under the exemption.

The USPPA agrees that this interpretation would indeed make two place tandem training safely available to more instructors. And if this interpretation is correct then we will educate our instructor members accordingly.

Would you please provide clarification by answering the questions below?

1. Is it acceptable that a foot launchable powered paraglider that happens to have wheels be launched or landed on a tandem instructional flight, using those wheels, under either exemption listed above?

Further, the USPPA exemption grant says: *The petitioner defines a powered paraglider as “any ultralight vehicle where the powerplant is attached to the pilot and the pilot/student supports at least their own weight on foot during launch and landing until the wing begins generating lift.”*

The intent of this wording was to allow the motor to support its own weight, even if that means wheels, so that lightweight pilots can still do foot launching. The instructor and student run during takeoff and landing but the motor supports its own weight. Such craft are being designed but the builders, understandably, want to make sure their craft will indeed operating appropriately under the law. which brings up the last question:

2. Is it acceptable that the motor unit has skids or wheels intended to support its own weight during launch and landing. The instructor and student are supporting their own weight during the launch and landing.

Thank you for clarifying this issue.

Jeff Goin
President
United States Powered Paragliding Association