

Primer for

PRE-FORMATION EVALUATION FLIGHT – T-6 TEXAN

The Pre-Formation Evaluation Flight checklist was developed by Greg Dexter and Mike Ginter to improve the safety, quality and efficiency of initial formation training in the T-6 Texan. This flight lasts 20 minutes and is intended to be flown as a single ship with a qualified Lead/IP in the back seat. This checklist was tested on 4 “newbies” during the Culpeper NATA/CAF TRARON Clinic held on Oct 10-13, 2012, and each pilot demonstrated notable performance improvements in the listed areas.

Why require a Pre-Formation EVAL Flight? Most Check Pilots and Instructors would agree that several recurring mistakes are observed during NATA and CAF TRARON clinics:

- 1) **Lack of proficiency** in formation takeoff procedures (unsafe on 1st formation takeoff)
- 2) **Improper/unsafe Break procedures**
 - a. Less than adequate speed in the Break (risk of Accelerated Stall in pattern)
 - b. Less than 60 degrees AOB / Less than 2 g's (pattern too wide)
 - c. Not keeping wings level/eyes forward until your turn to break (bad looking break)
- 3) **Flying an improper pattern after the break**
 - a. Not completing 180 degrees of turn to downwind (pattern too wide)
 - b. Maintaining wings level for too long on downwind (strung out pattern)
- 4) **Not maintaining proper spacing in the landing pattern**
 - a. Improper interval (1000 ft) on preceding aircraft (strung out pattern)
- 5) **Improper landing technique, leading to a stretched out pattern**
 - a. Landing in 3 point attitude on the numbers (causing others to wave off)
 - b. Flaring at the numbers, and “flying” to touchdown point (wake turbulence)

The results of this EVAL flight were very positive:

- 1) **New Sight Picture:** The students practiced a new regime of flight in a less demanding environment (single ship). Most had never flown a 2G break turn to midfield abeam position on downwind, to a continuous descending turn to final, using a steep approach to a touchdown point midway down the runway, using only the left or right side of the runway.
- 2) **Higher Expectations:** A higher level of performance excellence was expected by the IPs and demonstrated by the Newbies during this flight.
- 3) **Improved Safety:** The Students were more proficient and confident after this hop.

This single-ship EVAL Flight is to be followed by several 2-ship formation flights in order to build and demonstrate safety and proficiency before beginning 4-ship training flights.

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