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## INTRODUCTION

From around the world, there has probably been no other airplane more admired or utilized than the Douglas DC-3. We share the admiration and respect for this airplane that has held a major role in shaping the course of aviation as we know it.

We have taken considerable time and effort to re-structure and organize all of the material that we have been able to find concerning the DC-3. All of this material is for educational purposes only. We have created manuals, checklists, and review guides, all of which are available on our web site.

We hope that you find these materials both useful and interesting. Best of all, they are free. Here is some more information that you might find useful.

## GENERAL

**You bought a DC-3?** We did! And we get asked this a lot: Why? First of all, we love airplanes. The DC-3 is the airplane of all airplanes as far as we are concerned. But it was only just a few years ago that we were presented with the opportunity to buy a DC-3 and conduct training in it. Since we already owned an Aviation Training Center, the DC-3 complemented the training and consulting services that we already offered. We are always amazed at the number of people from around the world that still hold this aircraft type as their all-time favorite airplane. The DC-3 as a type of airplane has now entered the final years of its existence and has traveled almost a full airplane life cycle.

## YOU WROTE THE BOOK?

Kind of...As old as the airplane is, one of the first things that we discovered when we first started to operate the airplane was that the books, manuals, and checklists were every bit as old as the airplane itself. There are a lot of old books around, but they all had pages that were cracked and yellowed, the diagrams were weak, and they just were not in good shape. Some diagrams had been photo copied so many times that they just weren't legible any more. So we set to work. We collected every book, checklist and maintenance manual that we could find on the DC-3. If you are missing your manual, we probably have it here! We read them, took them apart, and combined them. The process took the better part of two years to complete. What we ended up with is a combination of all the books presented in a simplified and standardized format.

We call this book the DC-3 Ground Training Manual or "GTM". The GTM includes descriptions and information about all systems on the Douglas DC-3. The completed book is now on file at our facility. As we come across changes or improvements, we will make those changes and post the new copies on the web. If you find any information that is not accurate or could be improved, please contact us and suggest your changes.

Next, we used the very specific guidance found in the FAA publication - FAA-S-8081-5D: **AIRLINE TRANSPORT PILOT AND TYPE RATING PRACTICAL TEST STANDARDS** for DC-3 training and ratings. Since this book is the backbone of all training and check rides for our part 91 training operation, we built a special book based on this FAA publication that we call our DC-3 Flight Training Manual or "FTM". Both the GTM and the FTM are available in PDF format on our web site. All of the checklists and the other related study and reference materials are always posted on our web site at: [www.theDC-3network.com](http://www.theDC-3network.com)

You can always determine if you have a current copy of all of the material by comparing the date in the upper right hand corner of your current copy against the date for each section as posted on the web. If your version is not what is posted, simply download that particular section and replace it in your book with the current section.

Next, since we are primarily using our Douglas DC-3 as a training aircraft, we had to obtain an FAA deviation to FAR part 125. We completed that process and it is also on file at our Training Center. If you have a DC-3 and need help with this area, we can help you obtain yours.

Next came the AAIP. If you are not familiar with this abbreviation, it stands for "**Approved Aircraft Inspection Program**". An FAA approved AAIP is required to be on file with the local FSDO prior to operating a DC-3. We looked around and found several active DC-3 AAIP programs. The documentation on each was old and typewritten. We took the time to blend the best of all the AAIP programs for the DC-3s that we could find and built our own. Our AAIP is now all computerized and has been approved by our local FSDO. If you need help with your AAIP, we would be glad to help you build a customized AAIP for your airplane or your operation.

## SOME HISTORY!

In the early days of aviation, airplanes were built out of the material that was most readily available: Wood! Wood and fabric formed the framework of all airplanes from the first flight in 1903 all the way up until the point that it just didn't work anymore. What changed? Plenty. The airplane itself became recognized by the business world as a great way to make money. Someone discovered that there were actually people that would pay to fly to their destinations. So as history would have it, airplanes were being built to carry more weight, to fly further, and to fly in less than ideal weather. Just like many other business models, the manufactured wood and fabric airplane concept remained the standard until it was just too costly to continue making them that way.

Also, there was a Fokker Tri-Motor crash that changed aviation. It occurred on March 31, 1931. The post accident investigation revealed what had failed and the real cause of the fatal accident. The wooden spar that formed the backbone of the structure and held the wings in place had failed. The crash was fatal for all occupants on board and forced the market and the fledgling world of commercial aviation to search for a new construction material. That material turned out to be aluminum.

Boeing was quick to design and build the airplane that they called the 247. The 247 was an all metal twin engine aircraft with good range. All available production slots were quickly secured by United Airlines. This left United's close competitor TWA and all other airlines with a minimal chance of survival if they could not secure aircraft. The Douglas Aircraft Corporation recognized this as both a problem for the other airlines, and an opportunity for their own company. Douglas was quick to design their own all-metal airplane and proudly called it the DC-1. Douglas saw that they had a real performer on their hands and quickly made refinements and improvements. The end result was the airplane that changed the world - the DC-3. The Douglas DC-3 made its first flight on December 17, 1935, just 32 years after the first flight by the Wright brothers, and just shy of 5 years after the crash of the Tri-motor. The rest is history. Called "The timeless aircraft", the DC-3 is still in use worldwide and enjoys a lifting capacity still hard to match by newly designed aircraft.

## DISCLAIMER

As previously discussed, the accompanying chapters constitute a Ground Training Manual (GTM) and a Flight Training Manual (FTM). We did not write an AFM or a flight manual for the DC-3. You will not find a copy of either our GTM or our FTM on board our aircraft. These books were written purely for educational and reference purposes only. Please do not attempt to use any of the material as FAA approved airplane manuals in any way.

We must also caution that there are multiple airframe and engine configurations for the DC-3. The data presented in these documents represents the data and techniques unique to our operation only.

Care must be exercised in the proper operation of your own aircraft to ensure that you operate with the correct information that is appropriate to your operation and your aircraft.

We also recognize that there are many opinions concerning highly controversial topics like power settings for takeoff, engine operation, fuel additives, hydraulic lock, etc. The opinions expressed in these books simply represent our opinions at the time of writing. We make no claim as to the accuracy or reliability of any information contained herein. It is educational material, no more, no less!

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or especially any improvements, including typographical errors. We are always looking for ways to make our books more readable, accurate, and user friendly. Your comments are always appreciated.

**OUR INVITATION!**

Our DC-3 flies on a regular basis. We do a lot of type ratings and re-current training for the FAA as well as private individuals. We offer complete type rating packages and ATP add-on certificates for almost any need that you have.

On the other hand, if you would like a very economical opportunity just to get your chance to fly the DC-3, we invite you to do that. Please contact us to obtain the current cost. You can rent the aircraft with an instructor for a one-hour flight and share your cost with another pilot. We give you the opportunity to fly the aircraft for one half of that flight from the left seat. Where we go and what we do is up to you. We are pretty sure that you would particularly enjoy trying your hand at a few touch-and-goes in this airplane. Bring your camera and enjoy a trip back in time. You can find more information on our web site at [www.TheAviatorNetwork.com](http://www.TheAviatorNetwork.com)

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