



REDBIRD REPORT SHOWS INCREASING CONSOLIDATION OF FLIGHT TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS

The sixth-annual State of Flight Training Report, released at Migration, highlights the widening gap between large and small flight training providers.

Lakeland, FL (March 4, 2026) – Redbird Flight (Redbird), a leading provider of flight training technology, today released its annual State of Flight Training Report at the 2026 Migration Flight Training Conference (Migration). The comprehensive study, now in its sixth year, serves as a benchmark for the health of the flight training industry.

Key findings from the 2026 report include:

- **Bigger Is Better for Flight Training Providers** – Large and medium-sized flight training providers (FTOs)—those with 10 or more aircraft in their fleet—continue to report more favorable business outcomes than small flight training providers and independent flight instructors. In the 2026 report, large FTOs rated their business results at 4.1 out of 5, compared with 3.5 for independent CFIs.
- **Bigger Is Getting Bigger** – In Redbird’s inaugural survey and report in 2020, 84% of large flight training organizations reported having only one location. In the 2026 report, the number of FTOs reporting a single business location decreased to 33%. 17% said they have two or three locations; 23% said four or five; 11% said six to 10; and 11% said more than 10.
- **Learners Are Finishing Faster** – Data from the report suggest that the average time to complete a private pilot certificate was around 24 weeks in 2025, a steady decline from 30 weeks in 2020. The average time to complete an instrument rating was 15 weeks, down from 20 weeks in 2020.
- **DPEs Rate Applicants Less Favorably** – In the 2026 survey and report, only 7% of designated pilot examiners (DPEs) who responded think the quality of applicants today is better than it was five years ago. 26% said the quality of applicants is the same; 45% said it is worse; and 21% said it is much worse.

The 2026 State of Flight Training Report is based on responses from more than 1,100 students, pilots, and flight training providers collected between January and February this year. The majority of respondents, 89%, live in the United States.

The full report includes granular data on flight training costs, factors impacting training and checkride success, and challenges facing flight training organizations. For further insights and a full copy of the 2026 State of Flight Training Report, visit <https://www.redbirdflight.com/state-of-flight-training>.

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About Redbird Flight

Redbird Flight of Austin, Texas, was established in 2006 with the specific purpose of making aviation more accessible by using modern technology and careful engineering. Since its inception, Redbird has delivered innovative, reliable, and high-quality training devices to flight schools, colleges, universities, K-12 schools, and individual pilots around the world. With more than 4,000 devices in service worldwide, Redbird has quickly become the fastest growing and most innovative simulator provider in the industry. For more information, please visit www.redbirdflight.com.