



**Legal
to Fly**

What does it mean if you are told that your flight is a 'cost sharing' arrangement?

Non-commercial pilots can carry passengers in exchange for a financial contribution to the costs of the flight, without requiring an AOC. The costs must be shared between everyone on-board the flight including the pilot. Only the direct costs may be shared i.e. fuel, landing and handling fees. These flights can be advertised online through dedicated flight-sharing platforms which connect pilots with passengers, but the pilot has the right to amend or cancel the flight at short notice. The pilot must deal directly with the passenger, not through an intermediary and must provide a full safety briefing ahead of the flight.

Cost sharing flights are regarded as private arrangements and do not therefore meet the same safety standards as AOC flights.

More details can be found at caa.co.uk/General-aviation/Aircraft-ownership-and-maintenance/Cost-sharing-flights/


You can also travel legally as a non-paying passenger in a light aircraft operated by a private pilot. The pilot has sole responsibility for the conduct of the flight and you fly at your own risk. However, no money must change hands and the flight must be operated entirely at the expense of the pilot.

Passengers can also pay for an 'experience flight' in an historic aircraft, such as a Spitfire. The company providing these flights does not need to hold an AOC but will be specially approved by the CAA to ensure they are operating safely.

Never assume your flight is legal and never accept a flight on trust.

Make sure you're safe – ask to see proof of an AOC

Visit caa.co.uk/flysafe for more information



Everything you need to know about **flying safely** in light aircraft & business jets

If you are a paying passenger in an aircraft other than a scheduled airliner, how can you be sure your flight is legal and safe?

Whether you are flying as a passenger on business or leisure, if you or your employer has paid for a flight in a light aircraft or business jet then that flight must meet certain safety standards. Such a flight, often called an air taxi or an air charter, is recognised in law as commercial air transport and should never be considered as a private arrangement. The organisation or individual operating the flight must have the correct certificate, insurance and licences. If you pay for a flight which is unlicensed there could be serious consequences for your safety and you may not be insured. If you knowingly use an illegal operator you may also be breaking the law and could be prosecuted.



Make sure your flight is protected. Unscrupulous aircraft operators do exist. These people are only too willing to exploit the good faith of paying passengers for a quick profit. Help us stamp out this illegal and dangerous activity by only using approved operators.



You should do your own research by finding out the name of the organisation actually providing the flight (the operator). The company who sold you the flight (the ticket seller) may be a different entity. By law you must be told the name of the operator. You can then check if they are legal by visiting caa.co.uk/aocholders. You should also ask for the name and qualifications of the pilot.



If you cannot find out the company name, contact us at fod.admin@caa.co.uk and we will look into it for you.



Any company, organisation or individual that operates public transport flights must have permission from the Civil Aviation Authority. They will need to hold an Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) to prove they meet all relevant insurance and safety requirements. Such operators will be regularly inspected and audited by the CAA, and the pilot will need to have a commercial licence.



If a flight has been arranged for you, and you are not sure about the status of that flight, do not assume it is legal. Do your own research and find out if the operator has an AOC. If you are told the operator does not need an AOC, ask why not.



If you think you are being offered an illegal flight report it to the CAA iet@caa.co.uk. We will prosecute illegal operators.

