

Jet Proficiency- The Final Full Story

Because of the high demand for jet participation at fly-ins and model air shows the proficiency and proficiency ratings of jet pilots are important factors to be considered by pilots and organisers if they want to operate within the criteria for the above as set out in the SAMAA Manual of Procedures.

The situation regarding the proficiency requirements for Jet Pilots is somewhat complex and has led to some confusion and thus merits some explanation:

Firstly, there is the **SAMJA Turbine Proficiency Rating** (also known as the '**Vlamgat Rating**') which can be equated with a **Jet Solo Rating**. The candidate has to show competency in the safe handling of a turbine and demonstrate a specified level of competency in flying a turbine powered model aircraft. This test is not necessarily bound to competition performance and may be done at any time, anywhere, as outlined in the document on the SAMJA website. This rating indicates that the pilot can operate a turbine safely as well as fly a turbine powered model safely.

Secondly, there is the SAMAA fixed wing powered aircraft proficiency system as set out in the SAMAA Manual of Procedures, with Solo, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Instructors Proficiency Grades. Jet Pilots are encouraged to obtain these proficiency ratings. However, the testing procedures for these ratings were devised for prop driven aircraft and due to the specialized nature of jet flying some of the procedures are far from tailor made for jet aircraft and many jet pilots are reluctant to do some of these with a turbine powered aircraft for fairly obvious reasons

Since SAMAA requires Silver, Gold and Instructors fixed wing proficiencies to allow pilots to fly at a different levels of public display such as air shows etc, SAMJA, like MAASA and the LSMA, has devised a system to allow pilots to qualify for Bronze, Silver, Gold and Instructors Proficiencies through reaching specified levels of performance in competition as set out in the accompanying "**SAMAA Proficiency Rating Criteria for SAMJA Pilots**". This allows Jet Pilots to qualify for SAMAA Proficiency Ratings when participating in SAMJA Competitions as set out in the SAMAA Accepted Document below :

SAMAA Proficiency Rating Criteria for SAMJA Pilots

SAMAA proficiency ratings will be awarded to SAMJA pilots according to achievements during the previous two years participation at SAMJA recognised national and international competitions.

- A SAMAA Bronze proficiency rating will be awarded to any Sportsman or higher category pilot who has achieved a minimum average score of 55% in any recognized national SAMJA competition.*
- A SAMAA Silver proficiency rating will be awarded to any Aerobatic, SOS or F4J pilot who has achieved a minimum average flying score of 60% in any recognized national SAMJA competition.*

- A SAMAA Gold proficiency rating will be awarded to any Aerobatic, SOS or F4J pilot who has achieved a minimum average flying score of 65% in any recognized national SAMJA competition.
- A SAMAA Instructor proficiency rating will be awarded to any F4J pilot that has represented South Africa at a previous World Jet Masters Championship.

The Committee undertakes to scan the SAMJA records over the past 2 years for the highest proficiency rating that SAMJA pilots qualify for, and to advise the pilot of the result and arrange with SAMAA to award the applicable proficiency rating.

SAMJA undertakes to regulate the process and to provide SAMAA with the information on pilots that qualify on a regular basis.

The first proficiency badge (i.e. gold) will be issued by SAMAA at no costs, but any additional badges can be obtained at a cost of R20 per badge.

Your attention is drawn to the SAMAA ruling that to participate in public demonstration flights at your home club requires at least a Silver Proficiency Rating and to participate in public demonstration flights away from your home club requires a Gold Proficiency Rating, while regular public demonstration flying requires an Instructor Proficiency Rating.

The public demonstration flight ruling does not apply to normal flying or competing at a contest. It specifically refers to the demonstration of the art of flying a model to a group of paying or non paying observers.

To sum up:

In order to comply with the SAMAA criteria for flying at public displays a Jet Pilot needs the following:

1. The **Jet Proficiency Rating** (Vlamgat Rating) **Plus**
2. The **applicable SAMAA Fixed Wing Powered Aircraft Rating** which may be obtained in either of two ways i.e. the normal SAMAA proficiency testing system **or** by reaching a certain level of achievement in jet competitions as set out above.