

You've done research, and have decided chartering an aircraft is a reasonable alternative to airline travel for your business or family. You search online and contact the first two aviation companies you find. Both offer similar types of aircraft for your flight, but one supplies a significantly lower quote. **Why?**

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF ILLEGAL CHARTERS?

OVERSIGHT

The FAA and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) have much more stringent oversight of legal Part 135 charter operators than their illegal counterparts. This leads to a safer, more secure operation.

TRAINING

Pilots of legal Part 135 operations engage in mandatory indoctrination training upon employment and rigorous recurrent training every six months. Flight checks by senior pilots are administered regularly. Pilots of illegal operations are only required to undergo a flight check every two years.

EXPERIENCE

Legal Part 135 charter operations require high level of experience from their management personnel and pilots. Management personnel must have at least three years experience in the industry within the past six years, and pilots must have at least 1,200 hours of total flight time.

DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING

Crew members and maintenance personnel for legal Part 135 operations must undergo pre-employment and random drug and alcohol testing. Illegal operators typically do not test their employees.

MAINTENANCE

Aircraft used in legal Part 135 charter operations must be maintained to very strict standards, and only highly trained maintenance personnel may perform maintenance on these aircraft.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

The U.S. Department of Transportation requires a minimum level of insurance coverage prior to obtaining a Part 135 certificate. Illegal charter operators may not have adequate insurance to cover injuries or loss of life or property if an accident occurs.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The FAA holds the legal Part 135 certificate holder to a very high standard, and holds the certificate holder accountable for their actions or omissions.



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HOW TO DETERMINE IF YOUR OPERATOR IS LEGAL

1. Call your local Flight Standards District Office and inquire about the operator's safety and compliance record.

2. Ask the operator for their certificate number. A legal operator will be pleased to deal with an educated consumer.

3. If the deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Legal operators incur relatively high overhead costs to maintain the aircraft, train and test crew members, and stay compliant with FAA and TSA regulations. Illegal operators are able to offer significantly lower prices, but at much greater risk.

More information on how to charter an aircraft is available in NATA's "*Chartering an Aircraft: A Consumer Guide to Help You Fly Smarter.*" NATA offers the guide for download free of charge to consumers at: www.nata.aero/avoidillegalcharter