

SECTION 6 WEIGHT AND BALANCE

6.1 GENERAL

In order to achieve the performance and flying characteristics which are designed into the airplane, it must be flown with the weight and center of gravity (C.G.) position within the approved operating range (envelope). Although the airplane offers a flexibility of loading, it cannot be flown with the maximum number of adult passengers, full fuel tanks and maximum baggage. With this loading flexibility comes responsibility. The pilot must insure that the airplane is loaded within the loading envelope before takeoff.

Misloading carries consequences for any aircraft. An overloaded airplane will not take off, climb or cruise as well as a properly loaded one. The heavier the airplane is loaded, the less climb performance it will have.

Center of gravity is a determining factor in flight characteristics. If the C.G. is too far forward in any airplane, it may be difficult to rotate for takeoff or landing. If the C.G. is too far aft, the airplane may rotate prematurely on takeoff or tend to pitch up during climb. Longitudinal stability will be reduced. This can lead to inadvertent stalls and even spins; and spin recovery becomes more difficult as the center of gravity moves aft of the approved limit.

A properly loaded airplane, however, will perform as intended. Before the airplane is licensed, it is weighed, and a basic empty weight and C.G. location is computed (basic empty weight consists of the standard empty weight of the airplane plus the optional equipment). Using the basic empty weight and C.G. location, the pilot can easily determine the weight and C.G. position for the loaded airplane by computing the total weight and moment and then determining whether they are within the approved envelope.