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by governor.state.ms.us; Fri, 21 Jan 2000 00:18:51 -0600
X-MsgID: 68252
X-SubID: 82016762
X-ListID: 2326
Date: Thu, 20 Jan 2000 22:29:18 -0700
Message-Id: <20000120222918.000097@ms6.emailpub.com>
X-Sender: aopa@mail.0mm.com
Errors-To: aopa@mail.0mm.com
To: DANIEL FORDICE <governor@govoff.state.ms.us>
From: AOPA e-Pilot Newsletter <aopa@mail.0mm.com>
Subject: AOPA ePilot--Vol. 2, Issue 3
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Mime-Version: 1.0

AOPA ePilot Volume 2, Issue 3 January 21, 2000

AOPA values its relationship with you. If you don't want this free newsletter, reply with the word UNSUBSCRIBE as the subject.

SOME MAGAZINES DELAYED

If you haven't received your January "AOPA Pilot," don't panic! A vendor inadvertently delayed a small portion of our mailing, but is now expediting their delivery. You should receive your issue shortly. If your "AOPA Pilot" does not arrive by January 25, please contact us at (<mailto:memberassistance@aopa.org>).

IN THIS ISSUE:

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---GA NEWS---

FAA RELEASES TWIN CESSNA EXHAUST AD

This week the FAA released AD-2000-01-16, the long-awaited final version of the airworthiness directive (AD) affecting twin Cessna exhaust systems. At the request of AOPA, the FAA has allowed a 60-day comment period. Early last year the FAA published, as an emergency final rule, an AD requiring costly repetitive inspections of exhaust systems on turbocharged twin Cessna models T310 to 421C (except 337). In response to massive industry uproar, the FAA rescinded the direct-to-final-rule AD and allowed the public 30 days to comment. AOPA and the Cessna Pilots Association (CPA) recommended an alternative inspection procedure that substantially reduced the cost of AD compliance and eliminated the extended periods of aircraft downtime that would have resulted from the proposed AD. AD 2000-01-16 is effective February 15. However, the rules docket will remain open for public comment until April 14. AOPA's initial evaluation of the rule is that it is far less onerous than the original proposal. For example, the FAA will now rely initially on more visual inspections and will only require removal of major components during engine overhauls. AOPA staff is carefully analyzing the provisions of the AD and will be submitting additional comments prior to the closure of the comment period. For a copy of the final rule, a complete outline of the compliance actions that it requires, AOPA's position, and the address for comment submission, visit AOPA Online at

GPS/WAAS HIT BY ANOTHER DELAY; MINIMUMS HIGHER

Because of technical problems during the FAA's Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) certification process, the WAAS initial operational capability will likely slip three months to December 2000. Although there was a hope that the FAA would be able to offer GPS/WAAS-based "precision" instrument approaches down to Category 1 minimums in some areas immediately, this certification problem appears to have dashed that hope. The GPS/WAAS precision approaches implemented later this year will provide decision altitudes only slightly lower than those of today's non-precision approaches. The good news is that WAAS will still permit pilots operating outside radar coverage to gain access to the IFR system without the requirement to have a VOR or NDB station within range. Category 1 GPS/WAAS precision approaches will now be introduced next year, with further expansion of those approaches in subsequent years.

NTSB URGES LIST OF OVER-COUNTER DRUGS

On January 13, the NTSB made several safety recommendations to the Department of Transportation (DOT), the FAA, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Citing accidents in all modes of transportation in which both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications were said to be contributing factors, the NTSB recommended that DOT publish and maintain a list of medications that would not impair an individual's ability to safely operate a vehicle. Further, the NTSB recommended that the FAA (and other modalities) establish criteria for the use of medications not on the DOT's "approved" list. The NTSB also requested that the FAA educate pilots on the potential hazards of using certain medications, and recommended that the FDA create new regulations requiring more prominent warning labels for prescription and OTC medications that have potentially dangerous side effects. AOPA is opposing any medication listing or additional FAA regulations, as the FAA currently maintains a high level of oversight over airmen's use of medications. Instead, AOPA and the AOPA Air Safety Foundation are advocating greater pilot training and education, and clearer warning labels for consumers. For more information see AOPA's regulatory brief at (<http://www.aopa.org/whatsnew/regulatory/regntsbmed.html>).

AUSTRALIAN FUEL CRISIS CONTINUES

The refining industry worldwide got a wakeup call in January when thousands of GA aircraft were ordered grounded in Australia. A quantity of 100/130-octane avgas was contaminated at a Mobil Oil Australia refinery by Ethylene Di-Amine. The chemical is used to prevent corrosion of refinery equipment. An aircraft with contaminated fuel lost power on takeoff in December. The contaminant reacts with carbon dioxide in the air to form white or clear deposits inside fuel tanks. If the contaminant makes contact with copper or brass in the fuel system, a black, sticky substance is formed that can block filters and carburetors. To track the story yourself, see the Mobil Oil Australia site: (<http://www.mobil.com.au/news/media.htm>). For Australian government press releases, see (<http://fed.gov.au/medrel.htm>) and search on "contaminated fuel," or see AOPA Australia's site (<http://www.aopa.com.au>).

CANADA TO CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR SNOWBIRDS

The Canadian government has decided to continue its popular Canadian Snowbirds military formation flying team. The budget is tight, but chances are described as "better than 50 percent" that military authorities will find the money. The team is seen at 10 air shows a year in the United States, and 65 elsewhere. The aircraft will be replaced in two years either by Raytheon's new T<ETH>6A Texan II turboprops, known to Canadian pilots as the Harvard II, or the British Aerospace Hawk 115 jet. To see the Snowbirds schedule for 2000, visit the Web (<http://www.snowbirds.dnd.ca/index.asp>).

NATIONAL TEST PILOT SCHOOL BACK IN BUSINESS

The U.S. State Department has decided that the nation's only privately operated test pilot school may teach "generic" math and physics to foreign military students. The Mojave, California, school is in the process of obtaining a license that the State Department once said was not needed. Students study aircraft stability using 20- and 30-year-old aircraft obtained as surplus from other nations. So far the State Department has told the school that no license was needed, then shut the school down for not having a license--and then reversed its decision within days.

---INSIDE AOPA---

LACK OF FUEL NOW A NOTAM ITEM

Thanks to AOPA's suggestion to the FAA Notam Working Group, the FAA will now issue notams if fuel is unavailable at an airport that normally has fueling operations. This change will become effective in February.

AGING AIRCRAFT ISSUE ADDRESSED

"Aging" general aviation aircraft are still safe, AOPA told the FAA "General Aviation Summit" meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, January 10 and 11. In his opening remarks, Dennis Roberts, AOPA vice president of government and technical affairs, said any new FAA initiatives must be "data driven." The summit must not result in a "solution looking for problem." Roberts said that there is no current data to show that older aircraft are at greater risk for mechanical-related accidents. He said that inadequate maintenance is usually the root cause of these types of accidents.

MODE C EXEMPTION UNEXPECTEDLY WITHDRAWN

The FAA last week unexpectedly withdrew the "Mode C Veil Exemption" (SFAR No. 62), which permitted aircraft without altitude-encoding (Mode C) transponders to operate out of some 300 specified satellite airports located below the 30-nm "Mode C veils" of Class B airspace primary airports. It's not yet known whether the FAA will immediately start enforcing the provisions of FAR 91.215, which requires all aircraft with electrical systems to carry and use Mode C transponders when operating within a Mode C veil. AOPA has asked the FAA to state its intentions regarding enforcement of the Mode C transponder requirement, but at deadline had not received a response. For now, AOPA suggests that owners of non-Mode-C-equipped aircraft who need to fly within a 30-nm Mode C veil ask the ATC facility controlling the airspace for authorization. (See FAR 91.215 [<http://www.aopa.org/members/files/fars/far-91.txt>]). Need a phone number of an ATC facility? Try looking it up here: (<http://www.aopa.org/members/airports/atc.pdf>).

BOYER MEETS PILOTS IN ALABAMA

Roosevelt Lewis of Air Tuskegee LTD at Moton Field Municipal Airport (06A) in Tuskegee, Alabama, met with AOPA President Phil Boyer following a recent AOPA Pilot Town Meeting. He brought along several of his students. The airport, built in 1941, is where the famed Tuskegee Airmen received primary training. It will be restored as a national historic site soon by the U.S. National Park Service. (For more, see "Pilot Briefing," June 1999 "AOPA Pilot").

---ON CAPITOL HILL---

FAA ASKING FOR \$100 MILLION BUDGET SUPPLEMENT

The FAA is asking its parent agency, the Department of Transportation, for an additional \$100 million. The FAA has attempted to curb its travel operations and not fill safety-related personnel vacancies in an effort to save money. The Clinton administration had requested \$6.04

billion for FAA operations in its 2000 budget request, but Congress cut the amount by \$139 million. If DOT approves, the request must also win approval from the White House Office of Management and Budget before it can be sent to Congress for final approval.

---AOPA AIR SAFETY FOUNDATION NEWS---

AIR SAFETY FOUNDATION ASKS YOUR HELP

Has a complex airport layout caused you confusion during taxi? Virtually all incursions and transgressions are inadvertent and may be due to poor airport layout, obscured markings, or unclear instructions. The AOPA Air Safety Foundation would like to hear from you. Your problem may not have resulted in an "official" problem with the controller, but if it caused you some uncertainty, we'd like to hear about it. Please e-mail a short paragraph to (<mailto:asf@aopa.org>) and describe where and when you've had difficulty, the type of aircraft, your certificate level and ratings, and total flight time.

---AIRPORT SUPPORT NETWORK NEWS---

ILLEGAL RESTRICTIONS AT SAN CARLOS DEFEATED

Threats to airports often come from local officials who are unclear on the federal government's jurisdiction over aviation matters. Such was the case at San Carlos, California, where county officials proposed restrictions on both nighttime and daytime restrictions at San Carlos Airport. AOPA Airport Support Network volunteer Carol Ford got wind of the problem, helped inform the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors about federal laws, and alerted AOPA headquarters. The restrictions, which had been proposed without proper study, were then shot down by the FAA. Another win for the Airport Support Network.

---QUIZ ME!---

Here's a question asked by an AOPA member last week of our AOPA technical specialists. Test your knowledge.

Question: Where can I find the weight-bearing capacity for runways?

Answer: Runway data can be found in the "Airport/Facility Directory." The directory contains a legend in the front of the book that explains the categories and assigns a code to each. The individual airport listings in the directory will list the appropriate category, by code and weight capacity, for each runway.

Got a technical question? Call 800/872-2672, or e-mail (<mailto:inforequest@aopa.org>).

---PICTURE OF THE DAY---

Jump to the AOPA Online Gallery to see the featured airplane of the day. Click on the link for details on how to capture wallpaper for your work area. Visit (<http://wwwr01.com/cg/rd.cgi?i=AOP014009>).

---ePilot CALENDAR---

FLY AWAY: ePilot PICKS FOR THE WEEKEND

NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA. Fifty wildlife artists from around the country exhibit their work at the Wildlife Arts Festival January 22 and 23 at the Virginia Living Museum. Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport (PHF) serves the area, 757/877-0221. Call 757/595-1900 for event information.

MELBOURNE, FLORIDA. The third annual Seafood Festival takes place

January 21 through 23 featuring fresh seafood, entertainment, and arts and crafts. Melbourne International Airport (MLB) serves the area, 407/723-6227. Call 321/768-0445 for event information.

YUMA, ARIZONA. Celebrate lettuce in the Lettuce Capital of the World January 22 and 23. The Yuma Lettuce Festival features food, displays, and arts and crafts. Yuma MCAS/Yuma International Airport (YUM) serves the area, 520/726-5882. Call 520/782-5712 for event information.

REPUBLIC, WASHINGTON. Traditional outdoor winter activities are featured at the Republic Winterfest January 21 through 23. Ice fishing, snowshoe walks, and snow volleyball are among the events. Ferry County Airport (R49) serves the area, 509/775-3939. Call 509/775-2704 for event information.

For more airport details, see AOPA's Airport Directory (<http://data.aopa2.org/airport/index.cfm>). For more events, see (<http://data.aopa2.org/pilotmag/calendar/index.cfm>).

ASF FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR REFRESHER CLINICS

The next AOPA Air Safety Foundation Flight Instructor Refresher Clinics are on January 22 and 23 in Jacksonville, Florida; Seattle; and Long Beach, California. Clinics are scheduled January 29 and 30 in San Jose, California; Baltimore; and Rochester, New York. For the Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic schedule, see (<http://data.aopa2.org/asf/schedules/fircl.cfm>).

ASF PINCH-HITTER GROUND-SCHOOL COURSES

The next Pinch-Hitter Ground School will take place January 30 in San Jose, California. For more Pinch-Hitter courses, see (<http://data.aopa2.org/asf/schedules/pinch.cfm>).

AOPA PILOT TOWN MEETINGS

Featuring AOPA President Phil Boyer--7:30 p.m. Admission is free. The next Pilot Town Meetings are in Salt Lake City February 29; San Jose, California, March 1; and Concord, California, March 2. For more information on Pilot Town Meetings, see (<http://data.aopa2.org/ptm/ptm.cfm>).

---YOUR WEEKEND WEATHER---

See (<http://www.aopa.org/members/wx/>).

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weekly newsletter on general aviation, with the word UNSUBSCRIBE as the
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