King Air

A MAGAZINE FOR THE OWNER/PILOT OF KING AIR AIRCRAFT

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He Said, She Said

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COVER PHOTO
Joe and Deanna Casey photographed by Kate Motion and Still

HE SAID,

CREDIT: KATE MOTION AND STILL

SHE SAID

READ AN ILLUMINATING DEBATE ON AIRCRAFT LIGHTING BETWEEN THIS HUSBAND AND WIFE DUO.

by Deanna Casey & Joe Casey

There are many great debates among pilots, many of which you've probably debated yourself over an airport cafe lunch table or, more likely, within a social media group. You know the ones – lean of peak versus rich of peak, twin-engine safety versus single-engine safety, glass cockpits versus steam gauges, parachute or no parachute, etc.

There is no shortage of debate topics or opinions in a room full of pilots! The topic we are going to tackle today is one that is a regular discussion in our workplace hangar: When do you turn on certain aircraft lights?

You would think this is a cut-and-dried issue, but somehow highly experienced pilots manage to duke this out regularly. After you read this article you'll realize my husband, Joe, and I are never going to agree or even agree to disagree just to stop the debate. We repetitively argue our respective sides to one another and whatever poor pilot happens to be nearby and typically starts staring at their shoelaces in an effort to remain quiet and not get dragged into the debate.

She Said

My husband says I'm a consummate rule follower, and he's not wrong. Rules give me a sense of freedom while they make him feel constrained. Regarding aircraft lighting, I like rules because they are also status indicators that mean something to those around us. Let's examine this from my perspective. I'll start in the order I would use these lights, from startup to shutdown.

Beacon: This is one of only two switches I would contend should be a dusty switch in the lighting category. This means that in the aircraft I fly, it is never touched or turned off if it has its own switch apart from wingtip strobes and is not tied to the overall strobe lighting system. The beacon falls into the anti-collision light category that the FAA says should be operational if the engine is running, except where it creates a safety hazard. If power is being applied to the aircraft, the beacon is running.

A visible beacon ensures anyone walking around nearby has a chance to notice there is an aircraft that has power

on for avoidance purposes. A bonus of never turning this switch off is that when I put an airplane away at the end of each flight, as I'm walking away from it on the ramp or about to close the hangar door, I can look back one last time and look for that flashing light indicating that I neglected to turn off my master battery power. I hate to admit (or maybe am happy to admit) that this method has prevented my return to a dead battery more than once in my almost three decades of flying when, in my post-flight haste to be somewhere else, I forgot this critical step in the checklist.

Nav lights: Navigation or position lights are the red, green and white lights found on the wingtips and tail of your aircraft that are supposed to give another pilot a visual indication of your direction at night when they spot you as traffic. The FAA says these lights must be on from sunset to sunrise. In practice, this is the other dusty switch for which I am a proponent. If they are not already on because they have been left that way, the nav lights come on as soon as I apply battery power to the aircraft.

Why? Because I like for others in the vicinity of the aircraft to know that there is power to it and that an engine start may be forthcoming. These lights cover almost all angles of view for a passing person and let them know not to get too close to the aircraft without first getting the pilot's attention in the cockpit. If I am in an aircraft without a dedicated beacon light, these are the lights I leave on instead as I walk away from the aircraft, just for that look back that lets me sleep easier that night, knowing I didn't forget to turn the battery master off.

Taxi light: This is an easy one. Turn it on when you're ready to taxi, day or night. The easiest way to let a lineman or marshaller know that you are ready to leave your spot on the ramp is to flash the taxi light several times, then leave it on. This simple practice prevents you from looking like a drowning person waving for help as you try to get their attention through the window, for which they may not be able to see you because of glare or darkness. Leaving the light on as you taxi, even during the day, stands a good chance of catching the attention and preventing a slightly inattentive pilot from taxiing in front of you as they approach an intersecting taxiway. Turn this light off when you reach the runup or ramp area at the end of your taxi.

Landing light: This is a light I use differently based on whether I am approaching a controlled or non-controlled airport, and this light has saved me lots of frequency air time over the years. Let's start first and foremost with what the regulations say. The FARs state a landing light must be operable for aircraft operations for hire at night. We can all get a little lax on checking this light in the summertime when days are long and night currency is difficult to keep. I challenge you to make this a part of your day and night flight preflight

checks. In addition to requiring the light for the above flights, the FAA recommends that landing lights be on when below 10,000 feet as an additional collision avoidance measure.

Not only do lights make you more visible to aircraft in the vicinity, but they also make you more visible to birds. In the 90s, I helped collect and compile results from a survey a major airline conducted among its pilots to determine what effect lights had on bird strike occurrences. It turns out that planes with their taxi and landing lights on reported far fewer bird strikes than those that had their lights off. Those with pulsing taxi or landing lights reported even fewer still. Besides making yourself easy to see to other traffic, do yourself a favor and increase your odds of avoiding a costly bird strike incident as well.

I mentioned in the first sentence of this section that I use my lights differently when approaching uncontrolled versus controlled fields. When approaching either, wingtip-mounted taxi lights go on below 10,000 feet, per the FAA's safety recommendation. If you're in a retractable gear aircraft with your taxi and landing lights attached to your nose wheel, this advice means little to you, as you're not likely to have your gear extended as you pass through 10,000 feet. Flip the switches anyway, as they'll be visible soon enough.

My exception to this below 10,000-foot rule on the landing light is when I land at a controlled field. In that instance and that instance only, I do not touch my landing light until I have heard the words "cleared to land." When those words are read back, I flip that switch. This little practice has saved me some on-air time when I'm on short final and can't remember whether I received the landing clearance. A quick look at the switch that I only turn on when the landing clearance is received affirms what I could not recollect. If I see that switch in the off position during that final approach check, I ask for my landing clearance from the controllers.

Strobe/Anti-collision lights: Ugh. These lights are the ones that annoy me the most when used improperly. Let me be very clear: I don't care if you have LED lights that will never burn out and have new timing mechanisms that make them only slightly less obnoxious when viewed from close up by an unsuspecting passerby or low-sitting aircraft. These lights should go on when you are ready to roll onto the runway and back off as soon as you clear the runway after landing. They should never be left on while taxiing, sitting on a ramp or in a run-up area. Please, for the love of all things shiny and upright, stop blinding the people around you on the ground.

As you can see, I clearly love rules, customs and mental cues centered around aircraft lighting. From my perspective, they are built-in tools in our toolbox that can be used on an aircraft in meaningful ways. If they were meant to come on and stay on, they would be tied to the master battery switch and wouldn't have their own on/off switch! Feel free to try to change my mind … Joe attempts it regularly.

He Said

In the Army we had ramp police. This title was ascribed to that small band of nit-noid pilots in the unit who would look for anything and everything for which to complain. Miss the yellow line with the nose tire while parking? The ramp police would let you know. Don't have the blades at a perfect 45-degree position after shutdown? The ramp police would talk about you at the next pilot briefing. Taxi in with the lights in the wrong configuration? Heaven help you … you'd hear about that for the next month.

Every unit has ramp police, and general aviation has its own version of the ramp police. I taxied into a ramp at a regional airport recently in a Piper M600 with LED lights, and one of the crusty old Cessna Citation pilots asked why I taxied in with my landing light on. Yup, you guessed it: He was one of the ramp police.

What is their favorite sin of no consequence to point out? Mishandling aircraft external lighting.

There was (is) a set of unwritten rules that mandated the use of external lighting. A fair summation of these rules is:

- The anti-collision light is to be turned on before starting the engine(s) to visually announce to people on the ground that the airplane is about to be started.
- Position lights are to be used only during nighttime operations.
- Landing and taxi lights are runway items that are turned on when taking the runway and turned off when the wheels come up; turned on again when the landing gear is lowered and off again when leaving the runway.
- Strobe lights are to be turned on when taking a runway and turned off when leaving a runway. The only time the strobe lights are turned off in flight is during flight into IMC to reduce the strobe effect that could instigate flicker vertigo.

In modern times, though, things have changed. We now have LED lights, or we should have LED lights. While we have new and improved lights, we don't have new and improved unwritten rules or a new and improved cadre of ramp police. So, I think it is acceptable for new rules to be written.

A fair summation for the new rules for flying with LED lights should be: Turn on all lights and leave them on.

That's it. Period. Turn them on and leave them on. External aircraft switches should be dusty switches, also known as cockpit switches that don't get moved much.

But every time I teach this new rule to pilots, I get huge pushback. I'll hear lamenting such as "We must follow the checklist," "I don't want to annoy others" or "That's not what my instructor taught me." It seems that old habits are hard to kill. The ramp police are out in full force.

There might be some written rules related to external lighting in Part 121, 135 and military jet flying but only because of SOPs (standard operating procedures) that are inherent to those operations. In Part 91 flying, though, there is no rule for operating external lights on an airplane other than FAR Part 91.209. That regulation mostly pertains to night flight and does not give specific guidance for use of landing lights, logo lights, strobe lights or any other type of lighting bolted on the airplane during daytime operations.

With this discussion, I'm going to assume you already have LED lights on your airplane. Don't have LED lights? Tsk, tsk, let's change that today. LED lights are far better than old-style incandescent lights. LED lights don't create extra heat, use hardly any electricity and the bulb life is more than 20,000 hours (far longer than any GA airframe lifespan). In today's aviation world, there's simply no reason not to change to LED. So, if you use incandescent lights, then you should probably read the unwritten rules (above) and act accordingly. But, if you have joined us here in modern times, you've upgraded to LED and the rest of this article is germane to your flying.

Strobe/Anti-collision lights: In the old days, a strobe light was annoying if turned on while on the ground. The strobe light was intended to be annoying; it was meant to draw attention, visually shouting, "Here I am!" There was nothing worse than waiting in line for takeoff and having some rookie ahead of you turn on their strobe light.

Old-style incandescent strobe lights blinked at 7 to 14 beats per second, a rate which mysteriously can create flicker vertigo. Flicker vertigo is a real thing that can be completely incapacitating, and there's no reason that any strobe light in aviation should flicker in the 7 to 14 beats per second range. Today, we've got LED strobe lights that are designed to not pulse at a frequency that can elicit flicker vertigo. Modern LED strobes do a great job of pulsing at a rate that is obvious yet not annoying.

Nav lights: We've been told not to use position/nav lights during the daytime because for decades the incandescent position lights had a limited life. A reasonable owner/pilot would not use the position lights to save them for a night flight. In turbine airplanes, everything must work and a burned-out nav light could cause the trip to be delayed or canceled until maintenance can replace the bulb. Now we have LED position lights available with a 20,000-plus-hour bulb life, which should never need replacement. You can turn on your LED position lights and leave that switch on forever, making it a deserved dusty switch in your airplane.

Landing light and taxi light: Why would a pilot not have these on all the time in flight? Most landing lights are attached to the landing gear of advanced airplanes, and when the gear comes up, the landing light is not visible.


SPECIAL MISSIONS
N350KA

I really don't care if the LED landing lights remain on (or off) while they are in the wells. They don't create heat, don't take up much electrical power and don't annoy anyone. So, it does not matter if the landing light switch is left in the on position always in flight. Turn it on and leave it on. In flight, the landing and taxi lights are dusty switches.

The only person who might be offended by leaving the LED landing light switch on is the line personnel during ground operations. I can see where the landing light could be considered annoying to the line personnel waving you into the parking spot at night, though during the day that light is certainly not annoying. Scarily, I see pilots flying at night attempt to be cool by turning off the landing light far too early and making much of their taxiing half-blind on a dark ramp. It is better to risk annoying a line guy than to drive your airplane into an unlit obstacle.

I took an informal poll of line personnel as I prepared to write this article, and I've come to the consensus that line personnel really don't care about aircraft lighting use during the day. What do they really want? They'd just really like for you to make a fast runup so they don't have to stand out in the sun/rain/snow/wind for long. Courtesy, respect, a smile and an occasional Thomas Jefferson are what they really want. Lights are inconsequential to ramp personnel.

Commonplace use of exterior lighting is based on an old system with incandescent lights and propagated by airline and military pilots, many of whom are cloaked ramp police who argue that everyone must follow the checklist. But they don't really know how your checklist reads in your Part 91 airplane. They'll tell you about the unwritten rules, but only because they were taught decades ago about them and have lived by "this is the way it has always been done." But there's a new unwritten rule!

When should you turn on and off the lights? You decide. Consider what type of lights are bolted on your airplane. For me, I turn all lights on for the entire flight and almost always while taxiing. I want to look like a Christmas tree flying around or taxiing around. I want everyone to see me. I want to be lit up like the Fourth of July. Turn everything on and leave it on. That goes for ground and flight. Remember, LED lights are not annoying.

The only exception on the ground is when I might be annoying. I try to be friendly to the line personnel if I'm shining a light directly in their face. If I'm in a long line awaiting takeoff at a big airport, I'll fit in and "while in Rome, I'll act like a Roman" and wait to turn on my strobe lights. No one wants to be annoying, or no one should want to be annoying. I don't want to be Pharisaical about either using or not using lights. But when given the chance, I light up everything.

There are many reasons to have the lights on in all phases of operation if you have LED lights and few reasons to turn off your lights. Remember, your POH was probably written decades ago when LED lighting was not available. Use lights to your benefit. There are now LED lights, and that changes everything.

The next time you are at an FBO, grab a hamburger and fries and sit where you have a nice view of the ramp. At some point, there'll likely be a modern airplane taxi with all the LED lights on. If not biased, you'll notice how the lights are pleasant, not annoying. You'll notice that you see that airplane sooner because of the lights. LED lights are not annoying and not offensive, unlike the ramp police. The rules have changed. And I think that is a good thing. KA

What's your opinion?

If you'd like to join this great debate in person, feel free to stop in at the big blue hangar at KLFK and join Joe and Deanna in their frequent rehashing of the subject. Otherwise, they'd love to see your letters giving them more great tips, tricks, anecdotes and uses for the lighting systems on your aircraft. Send your comments to *melinda@kingairmagazine.com.*

Joe Casey and Deanna Casey live in East Texas and operate Casey Aviation with locations at Angelina County Airport (KLFK) and Cherokee County Airport (KJSO). Joe founded the company, which specializes in PA-46/TBM/King Air training and offers a range of other services. They manage four Part 91 King Air aircraft and have ferried King Airs across the globe. Joe has 18,600 hours of total flight time, more than 4,000 of which are in King Air airframes. He is a certified ATP-ME/SE commercial pilot with ASEL/ASES, rotorcraft-helicopter/instrument and glider ratings. He also is a designated pilot examiner (DPE) with BE-300 type rating issuing authority up to the ATP level, and he also holds CFI, CFII, MEI, CFI-H, CFI-IH, CFI-G certificates. A career instructor, Deanna has amassed 13,000 flight hours since she started flying in 1997 and is a 25-year Gold Seal CFI/CFII/MEI with more than 4,300 hours dual given. She has a bachelor's degree in aviation management from Auburn University and a master's in aeronautical science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Deanna holds an ATP-ME certificate, is single pilot typed in the King Air 300/350 and flies all King Air variants regularly, including the B100 with TPE-331 engines.

Did You Take Your Supplements?

by Pete Marx

Over the years, many modification options have become available for the Beechcraft King Air. If you own or operate a King Air, there is a good chance your airplane has some modification made to it. How does the modification from the original airplane design affect the way the pilot operates the airplane? Why should I care? After all, a modification made to my airplane improves it. Otherwise, why would I spend so much time and money purchasing and installing it?

A modification to an airplane must go through a process before the Federal Aviation Administration will approve it. A supplemental type certificate, or STC, is issued when the manufacturer has received FAA approval to modify an aeronautical product from its original design. The STC approves not only the modification but also how that modification affects the original design.

Once the manufacturer has STC approval for the product, the optional equipment can be offered to the public and installed in the airplane. After installation, we may forget that there has been a change to the airplane and continue to operate the airplane using the original aircraft flight manual

(AFM). Is this a problem? Maybe, maybe not. It all depends on what the aircraft flight manual supplement (AFMS) states for that specific modification.

The AFMS is approved as an addendum to the aircraft's basic FAA-approved AFM. The AFMS is an essential part of the aircraft's inventory and is required by the FAA to be on board the aircraft. You will find it buried in the AFM's supplements section. If you have not looked through the supplemental section of the AFM, you are probably not alone.

The AFMS augments or supersedes the limitations, procedures and/or performance information in the original FAA-approved AFM for that specific tail number. The AFMS contains crucial information. It is important to compare the supplements to the original AFM to see what changes were made.

Any section of the AFM not changed by the AFMS remains the governing body. Depending on the modification, there may be many changes, a few changes or no changes at all. As the pilot in command, you are required to know the AFM and the AFMS, and you must be able to combine the two.

Let's look at an example: the emergency procedure sections in a factory King Air B200 AFM compared to the Garmin G1000 NXi B200 AFMS – specifically, the unscheduled electric elevator trim checklist. There is a subtle difference between the two. This difference could greatly affect the outcome.

Before King Airs were produced with Collins' Pro Line 21 and Pro Line Fusion systems, they had an autopilot (AP) yaw damper (YD) electric trim disconnect red button on the yoke that was a two-position switch. Pushing down to the first detent results in the AP and YD disconnecting; continuing to fully push to the TRIM DISC position results in the electric trim disconnecting. The electric trim could only be reset using the electric pitch trim switch on the pedestal. The unscheduled elevator trim checklist in the original AFM called for the red button to be pushed. There is no call to hold the button fully depressed because the electric trim is disconnected even after the red button is released. If the pitch trim continues to run away, some King Air checklists include a last step to pull the pitch trim circuit breaker.

Factory Pitch Trim Disc Switch vs. **G1000 NXi Pitch Trim Disc Switch**

Two-position switch

First detent: AP and YD off

Second detent: electric trim disconnected

To reconnect: the electric trim switch on the pedestal needs to be reset

One-position switch

Push button fully depressed: autopilot and yaw damper off, electric trim interrupted

Push button released: AP and YD remain off, **the electric trim returns to operation**

The AFCS circuit breaker location on a modified circuit breaker panel is noted with a red box in this photo.

When the G1000 NXi is installed, the red button on the yoke is modified. It is now a one-position switch. When depressed, the AP and YD are disconnected and the electric trim is interrupted. Once released, the AP and YD remain disconnected though the electric trim will reengage. Therefore, the AFMS emergency procedure will have you push and hold the red button until the automatic flight control system (AFCS) circuit breaker is pulled. If you had used the original AFM procedure – pushing and releasing the red button – the pitch trim would just reengage resulting in a possible loss of aircraft control.

The voice in your head just said, "I would just pull the pitch trim circuit breaker if it continues to run away." Unfortunately, with the Garmin modification the original pitch trim circuit breaker is no longer on the circuit breaker panel. The AFCS circuit breaker is the breaker that needs to be pulled now. This step is also included in the supplement. If you did not know this, you would have trouble finding the proper circuit breaker to pull after you released the red button and it continued to run away.

Reading and knowing the new procedures listed in the AFMS can be critical.

You may even have trouble in the heat of the moment finding the AFMS emergency checklist. Who can look through the extremely cumbersome AFM and find the one AFMS that is needed for this emergency? Once found, locating the emergency section of that supplement and the specific emergency checklist is not optimum to say the least. Back to our originally named unscheduled elevator trim checklist, it has now been superseded by the Garmin AFMS emergency checklist named autopilot or ESP (if installed) malfunction/pitch trim runaway.

It could make your life slightly easier if you make a copy of the emergency and abnormal sections of the supplement and keep them in an easily accessible spot in the cockpit, for example in your iPad Foreflight document section or in an old-school, three-ring binder with tabs for abnormals and emergencies.

Besides the emergency section of the AFM, other sections can be supplemented or superseded. The performance section is a good example. When a modification is made, such as upgrading engines, you would think a whole new performance section would be included in the AFMS. However, this doesn't always happen.

The FAA requires that for any modification that may adversely affect the time/distance/fuel used to climb performance in the AFM, the manufacturer must either:

1. Publish new cruise, range, endurance and/or fuel used performance data, or
2. Include both a limitation (in the limitations section) prohibiting the use of the fuel consumption data in the basic AFM and a statement in the performance section stating that the data is not approved for use.

Examples of the types of modifications that this pertains to include but are not limited to modifications that significantly increase the total drag on the aircraft or engine changes that affect the fuel consumption.

This policy only applies to the cruise, range, endurance or fuel used data and should not be applied to the performance data required to be published by the FARs (e.g. takeoff/land distance, climb performance). This data must still be published or a statement made that it is equal to or better than that shown in the basic AFM.

It is not unusual to see this statement in an AFMS: "Performance will be as good or better than originally published." That can leave you wondering, "What is my true performance data?" All you can do in this instance is use the original data in the AFM.

The AFM supplements section contains information necessary to operate the aircraft when equipped with optional systems and equipment (not provided with the standard aircraft). The appropriate information is inserted into the flight manual at the time the equipment is installed. These supplements are easy to miss, but as you can see, they can contain information critical to operating your King Air safely and efficiently.

Don't forget to take your supplements! KA

Pete Marx has more than 30 years of experience in the aviation industry, from flying as a captain and first officer on Beech 1900s, Jetstream 42s and Dash 8s for commuter airlines to flying cargo as a flight engineer and check airman in the Airbus 300 and DC-8 for DHL. He has been instructing in King Airs for the past 13 years and is currently an instructor at King Air Academy in Phoenix, Arizona.


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Monoplane Fever!

CREDIT: TEXTRON AVIATION

In 1928, the Travel Air Manufacturing Company introduced a series of enclosed cabin monoplanes aimed specifically at the emerging business aviation marketplace.

by Edward H. Phillips

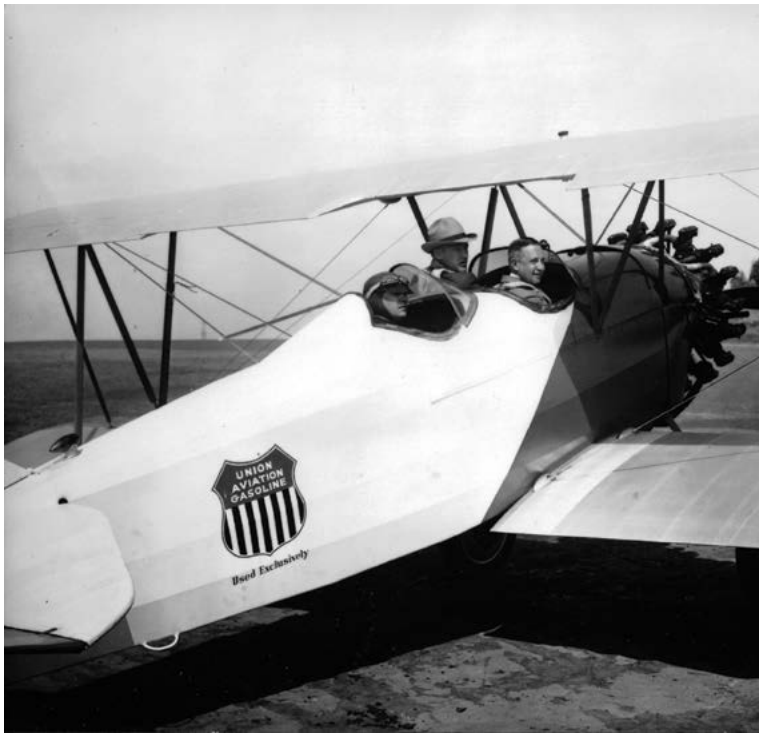
It is safe to state that the nonstop flight of Charles A. Lindbergh from Roosevelt Field, Long Island, New York, to Le Bourget Airport, Paris, France, in May 1927 ignited a massive wave of interest in the benefits of aviation. America's surge of enthusiasm for flying was shared by many corporations, whose historically ground-bound executives began to realize the advantages of owning and operating a business airplane.

The Travel Air Manufacturing Company was founded late in 1924 in Wichita, Kansas, by local businessman Walter Innes, Jr., aviation pioneer Clyde V. Cessna, pilots Lloyd C. Stearman and Walter H. Beech. Lloyd left the company in 1926 to found the Stearman Aircraft Company in California, and in January 1927 Clyde resigned to form the Cessna Aircraft Company, leaving Walter in charge of Travel Air.

The S6000B and SA6000A were certified for operation on floats. Robert S. Fogg (center) operated an S6000B in Concord, New Hampshire, for charter, air taxi and transporting fishing and hunting parties into the hinterlands. Fogg was a close friend of Walter Beech and a longtime Travel Air customer.

CREDIT: TEXTRON AVIATION

In 1927, Walter H. Beech became president of the Travel Air Manufacturing Company. The manufacturer offered four-place cabin biplanes as early as 1925 and introduced cabin monoplanes in 1927 that could accommodate four to six passengers. These aircraft were designed primarily for short-haul airlines, and by late 1927 Travel Air dealers were clamoring for a cabin monoplane designed specifically for corporate transport. Walter answered the call.



CREDIT: EDWARD H. PHILLIPS COLLECTION

By the late 1920s, businessmen who realized the advantages of aviation were growing weary of open cockpit flying and exposure to the elements of wind, weather, noise and exhaust fumes. This image shows executives of the Union Aviation Gasoline company embarking on a cross-country flight in a Travel Air Type 4000. A trip lasting up to three hours in warm weather was often a grueling affair but flights in the winter were intolerable.

Early in 1927, Lindbergh had asked Walter if the Wichita-based company could build a single-engine monoplane capable of carrying 400 gallons of fuel for a nonstop flight from New York City to Paris. Walter replied in the affirmative but declined Lindbergh's inquiry because the company had a large backlog of orders that took priority over any special projects. Instead, Lindy flew the Ryan NYP to Paris. His epic flight quickly infected America with a serious case of flying fever.

Walter Beech was also preoccupied with laying the groundwork for a new series of enclosed cabin monoplanes designed for the aviation-minded businessman. In addition to being a skilled pilot, Walter was an entrepreneur and an innovator. He had the ability to sense what the aviation industry wanted, and by 1927 he had concluded that the days of the open-cockpit biplane were waning. By contrast, the enclosed cabin monoplane was on the rise. Travel Air was not the first company to recognize the advantages of cabin aircraft (many designs had existed since the end of World War I), but Walter's vision centered on developing a modern monoplane built to meet the specific requirements of the businessman/pilot.

In November 1927, Walter and chief engineer Horace E. Weihmiller discussed plans to design a new Travel Air – dubbed a sedan model by Walter – that would combine speed with a comfortable, four-place cabin for conducting business and provision for two pilots. The *aviation-minded businessman* was a new, untapped market that Walter believed could pay handsome dividends for Travel Air. Fortunately, 1927 ended on a strong financial note for the company, meaning money would be available to build a prototype monoplane.

Miss Olive Ann Mellor, the company's multi-talented and indispensable office manager, reported that orders were on hand for every day of 1928! Since officially incorporating in February 1925, at least 200 airplanes had been built including 182 biplanes and 18 monoplanes sold to short-haul airlines. The factory worked double shifts day and night to keep pace with new orders from a nationwide network of dealers and distributors.

During the winter of 1928, the prototype slowly took shape in the factory on East Central Avenue, and in April the Travel Air Type 6000 cabin monoplane was ready for its first flight.

The Travel Air Type 6000 emerged from the factory in April 1928. Seating six passengers and two pilots, the monoplane was powered by a Wright J5-C nine-cylinder, static, air-cooled radial engine rated at 200 horsepower. Advertised as a Limousine of the Air, the monoplane was enthusiastically received by prospects and orders increased during the summer and autumn of 1928.

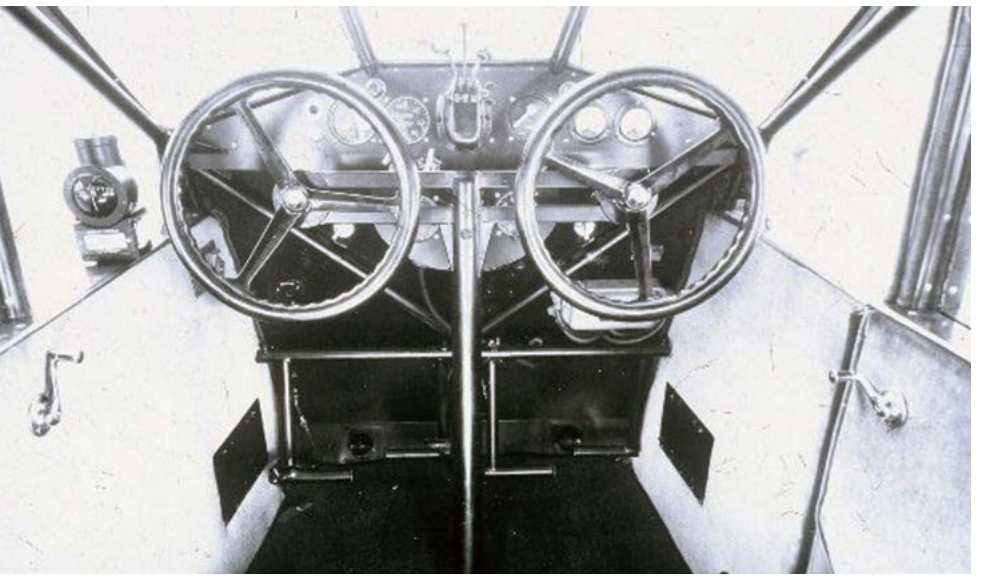
CREDIT: EDWARD H. PHILLIPS COLLECTION

CREDIT: EDWARD H. PHILLIPS COLLECTION

Pilots and businessmen liked the Type 6000 but wanted an airplane with a larger cabin and a more powerful engine. In late 1928, the company answered with the Type 6000B (the unit shown here was operated by the Johnson Flying Service based in Montana). Another version, the Type A6000A, was powered by a Pratt & Whitney radial engine developing 420-450 horsepower.

CREDIT: EDWARD H. PHILLIPS COLLECTION

A Type 6000B served as the official airplane of the 1929 National Air Races held in September in Cleveland, Ohio. Note the small oil cooler radiator mounted beneath the boot cowling.



The cockpit of a production Type 6000B featured circular control wheels, center-mounted quadrant for throttle, mixture, spark advanced/retard. Only basic flight and engine instrumentation were provided. A large magnetic compass was mounted on the left sidewall to minimize interference from metal assemblies. A cockpit door was on the right side of the fuselage. A second door on the left was optional and often ordered if the airplane was operated on floats. Automotive-type cranks, borrowed directly from automobiles, were provided to open and close cockpit and cabin windows.

CREDITS: EDWARD H. PHILLIPS COLLECTION

A large number of Type 6000B and A6000A were equipped with the optional lavatory installed in the aft cabin section. Both hot and cold running water were provided along with a cabinet, mirror and overhead light. Note small porthole windows and door with a lock for privacy.

Advertised as a *Limousine of the Air*, the airplane featured a cabin accommodating up to six passengers with two doors on the right side of the fuselage for entry/egress from the cabin and cockpit. In addition, the plate glass cabin windows could be raised and lowered by automotive-type cranks. The wing employed a Gottingen 398 airfoil section and spanned 48 feet, 7 inches. Fuselage length was 30 feet, 10.5 inches and overall height was 8.5 feet. Powered by a Wright Aeronautical J-5C, static, air-cooled nine-cylinder radial engine rated at 200 horsepower, flight tests revealed a maximum speed of 128 mph and a cruise of 108 mph. The monoplane had a maximum gross weight of 3,800 pounds and a payload of 506 pounds.

To demonstrate the airplane to prospective customers, Walter Beech flew the limousine in the Kansas Air Tour in June, and a few months later he garnered 14 orders during a tour of the East Coast. In September, sales manager Owen G. Harned flew the airplane more than 3,200 miles and gave demonstration flights to 700 businessmen and pilots.

Walter reviewed his ongoing market analysis as interest in the Type 6000 continued to increase. Surveys mailed to prospects clearly indicated strong interest in a corporate aircraft designed specifically for executive travel. Walter also noticed that respondents favored a monoplane over the ubiquitous biplane. Travel Air's manufacturing plans for 1929 indicated that biplanes would account for 60% of total production while cabin monoplanes would make up the remaining 40%. Actual sales, however, would almost reverse those estimates as it became clear the Type 6000 would be an excellent product for Travel Air.

The innovative airplane justified Walter Beech's belief that businessmen would buy a cabin monoplane. Feedback from flight demonstrations indicated that prospects wanted an aircraft with a larger cabin, more horsepower and a higher cruise speed. As a result, a major redesign began in earnest, creating the Type 6000B that cost $14,000 for a standard-equipped airplane. Project leadership shifted to veteran company engineer Herbert Rawdon. He was ably assisted by fellow engineers Walter Burnham, Cecil Barlow and Howard Baccus. Weihmiller had resigned late in 1928 to design the Corman Trimotor airliner.

As the next-generation monoplane took shape on the drawing boards, engineers prepared a voluminous amount of technical paperwork, including exhaustive airframe stress analysis, to secure an approved type certificate from the Department of Commerce. The airframe was enlarged and strengthened to allow installation of the nine-cylinder Wright J6-9 static, air-cooled radial engine that developed 300 horsepower. The cabin was widened and lengthened by 5 inches and the aft fuselage was 4 inches wider. In the cockpit, the throttle, mixture and spark advance/retard controls were relocated from the left cockpit sidewall and mounted in a quadrant at the center of the instrument panel (a small cockpit door was

an option). The main cabin door was enlarged to better facilitate cabin entry and egress and the loading and unloading of cargo.

Cabin chairs featured steel frame and wicker construction and could be richly upholstered and padded to meet customer preferences. An optional divan was also offered, as was a lavatory in the aft cabin equipped with hot and cold running water and a non-flushing toilet (a $195 option). The standard cabin could be quickly reconfigured to carry cargo. The window cranks were improved to make raising and lowering the glass easier, and the size of the six cabin windows increased to 32 x 15 inches for improved visibility for the passengers. A full-swiveling (but non-steerable) tailwheel was mounted on a shock strut and greatly improved maneuverability on the ground compared to the fixed tailskid installed on the prototype airplane.

Meanwhile, the factory had been equipped with jigs and fixtures to manufacture the 6000B and its more powerful cousin, the mighty A6000A powered by a 420- to 450-horsepower Pratt & Whitney R-985 radial engine. The first production Type 6000B was constructor number 732, delivered to Flyers, Inc., followed by C/N 790, registered NC6469, delivered in November to Wilbur D. May. The next airplane was custom-built for Hollywood actor Wallace Beery, who arrived at the factory on Dec. 14, 1928, to take delivery of Type A6000A (C/N 816), registered NC9015. After flying the new monoplane, Beery informed Walter Beech that he was pleased with his purchase. The cabin featured custom installations with all chairs upholstered in special velour fabric, and the divan was finished with a special, mauve-colored velour. In addition, a folding card table completed the cabin options that cost Beery an additional $1,000.

The A6000A featured additional bracing in the wings and the wing area was increased by 60 square feet to allow installation of fuel tanks with a total capacity of 130 gallons to feed the thirsty Wasp Junior compared to 80 gallons for the more economical Whirlwind-powered 6000B. Before taking off for California, Beery paid Miss Mellor a visit to her office. The airplane cost $18,000 (an enormous sum for a small airplane at that time) and he still owed Travel Air $10,000. He reached into his overcoat and handed Olive Ann a wad of 10 $1,000 bills and demanded a receipt!

In addition to Hollywood elites like Beery who flew Travel Air monoplanes, so did Lindbergh, who by now was America's favorite aviator. He and Walter knew each other well, and in 1929 when Lindy needed an airplane to fly down to Mexico to visit his future wife, Ann Morrow, daughter of United States Ambassador Dwight Morrow, Walter happily provided a Type 6000B. While in Mexico,

CREDIT: TEXTRON AVIATION

Film star Wallace Beery (left) and Walter Beech posed with Beery's custom-built Type A6000A soon after rollout from the factory in December 1928. The airplane cost Beery $18,000, which he paid in cash. Beery was an avid pilot and owned many airplanes during his career. The A6000A crashed in 1930 and was destroyed, but Beery was not on board.

CREDIT: EDWARD H. PHILLIPS COLLECTION

According to Travel Air records, the most expensive monoplane built was this $20,000 unit ordered by H.L. Ogg, president of the Automatic Washer Company (which later became Maytag). The cabin featured the latest in office equipment including a dictation machine, typewriter, filing cabinet and window curtains. The office equipment could be removed to make room for up to three washing machines for demonstrations and deliveries to customers. The pilot and secretary wore specially designed uniforms.

the airplane was damaged (not Lindbergh's fault), but it was repaired and flown back to Wichita. In 1931, the Wadlow brothers, Truman and Newman, renamed the monoplane the Romancer, offering in-flight weddings and airborne accommodation for "courting."

Production and deliveries of the Type 6000B continued unabated during 1929 as more and more orders poured into the factory. FAA records indicate that by the end of 1931 at least 150 had been built compared with only 10 to 12 of the Type A6000A.

Monthly sales of Travel Air biplanes and monoplanes peaked in June 1929 at $560,000. In September, the renamed Travel Air Company was absorbed into the giant Curtiss-Wright organization. Some engineering changes were made to the Type 6000B and A6000A, including installation of a larger, more panoramic windshield that greatly improved visibility and provided a more comfortable cockpit for the pilot and front seat passenger. The designations of these airplanes were changed to Type 6B and Type A6A and a new constructor number system was implemented to identify the Curtiss-Wright Travel Airs from the original monoplanes. During the early 1930s, several Type 6000B/6B monoplanes were exported to Mexico, Peru, Paraguay and Panama. Some of these airplanes were built as Type S6000B floatplanes.

Realizing that many customers would not need an airplane as large as the Type 6000B, Travel Air offered the smaller, four-place (including the pilot) Type 10 monoplane. It was similar to its larger siblings, but the wing featured a Gottingen 593 airfoil section. The airplane was offered with a choice of three engines: a Curtiss Challenger 185-horsepower, six-cylinder radial; the Wright Aeronautical R-760 rated at 225 horsepower; and the Wright J6-9 with 300 horsepower. The standard production version was the Type 10D equipped with the Wright J6-7. Only 11 examples of the 10B and 10D were built. Initially, prices ranged from $12,000 for the 10B and $11,000 for the 10D. Eventually, as the Great Depression deepened, prices were slashed as low as $5,500 with few or no buyers.

In the wake of Wall Street's debacle of October 1929, orders for new airplanes industry-wide had slowed to a trickle. The business pulse of America was barely detectable as demand for new cars, trucks, houses and

CREDIT: TEXTRON AVIATION

Travel Air's production version of the Type 10 was the 10D powered by a Wright J6-7 (R-760) rated at 225 horsepower. Note the revised windshield design that was incorporated on production Type 6B and Type A6A airplanes in 1929-1930.

CREDIT: EDWARD H. PHILLIPS COLLECTION

Late production monoplanes were redesignated Type 6B and Type A6A and featured a redesigned windshield that provided improved visibility and a larger cockpit area. Travel Air pilot Truman Wadlow flew this Type 6B in the 1930 Ford Reliability Tour, equipped with wheel fairings and a Townend ring for the 300-horsepower Wright J6-9 radial engine.

airplanes slowly dried up. Companies such as Travel Air became early victims of America's swift and stunning economic collapse. Curtiss-Wright officials decided to close the Wichita division of the company and move all production to its facilities in St. Louis, Missouri. As for Walter Beech, he was elected a vice president at Curtiss-Wright but resigned early in 1932 to form the Beech Aircraft Company.

By the end of 1931 and into 1932, the few remaining employees were given layoff notices. Roy Edwards was one of the last employees retained by Curtiss-Wright and was ordered to sell off all of Travel Air's factory equipment for pennies on the dollar. He recalled that only five years earlier the company did not have enough equipment to build airplanes fast enough, and now it was selling everything it owned with the giant factory complex going silent. The Travel Air Division in Wichita ceased to exist in September 1932. KA

Edward H. Phillips, now retired and living in the South, has researched and written eight books on the unique and rich aviation history that belongs to Wichita, Kansas.

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Garmin Autoland and Autothrottle Now Available for European Operators as a Retrofit Solution in Select King Air Aircraft

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency recently approved Garmin to offer its Autoland and Autothrottle to the retrofit market, starting with select G1000 NXi-equipped King Air 200 series aircraft.

This certification marks the first time Garmin Autoland and Garmin Autothrottle have been offered to European owners and operators as a retrofit solution. Full autothrottle integration with the G1000 NXi reduces crew workload in the cockpit by managing aircraft speed and power and provides engine protection against potential engine exceedances. In the event of an emergency where the crew can no longer perform their duties, Garmin Autoland can control and land the aircraft without human intervention. See *Garmin.com/ALuse* for system requirements and limitations.

Garmin Autothrottle

Garmin's Autothrottle, offered as a retrofit solution in the King Air, provides extensive safety-enhancing features and can greatly reduce workload in the busy King Air cockpit. Autothrottle is fully integrated with the G1000 NXi system and provides automatic control of the engine power levers from takeoff to landing. Autothrottle keeps power levers in the proper power setting, minimizing the threat of a possible throttle rollback. Power settings are based on manufacturer or user-configurable climb, cruise and descent schedules, including ITT limits. Additionally, Garmin Autothrottle provides ITT and torque protection by reducing power when the system senses potential overtemperature or overtorque conditions.

Garmin Autoland/Autothrottle is now available for European operators as a retrofit solution in select King Air aircraft.

Autothrottle will also activate automatically in the event of an aircraft overspeed or underspeed situation and considers flap and gear position, providing additional peace of mind for pilots operating the aircraft. If Autothrottle detects an engine failure, it automatically sets the power lever on the failed side to a fixed position and adjusts the operative throttle lever to maintain the selected airspeed reference.

Garmin Autoland

The Garmin Autoland system determines the most optimal airport and runway, considering factors such as weather, fuel on board, runway surface and length, terrain, obstacles and more. In the event of an emergency, passengers can activate Autoland with the press of a button, located in the back of the center pedestal for easy access. Autoland will activate automatically when the system determines it is necessary.

Once activated, the system calculates a flight path to the most suitable airport, initiates an approach to the runway and automatically lands the aircraft. The system takes into consideration a breadth of information and criteria. It will automatically communicate with air traffic control throughout the event, advising controllers and pilots operating near the aircraft of its location and intentions.

Throughout an Autoland activation, the system provides simple visual and verbal communications in plain language so passengers have the information and know what to expect. The flight displays show the aircraft's location on a map alongside information such as the destination airport, estimated time en route, distance to the destination airport and fuel remaining. Airspeed, altitude and aircraft heading are labeled in an easy-to-understand format, and passengers

"This certification marks the first time Garmin Autoland and Garmin Autothrottle have been offered to European owners and operators as a retrofit solution."

can communicate with ATC by following instructions on the multi-function display.

At any time, a pilot can easily deactivate Autoland with a single press of the AP autopilot key on the autopilot mode controller or the autopilot disconnect button on the yokes. The flight display shows a message that confirms Autoland has been deactivated and in the event of an accidental deactivation, the system shows passengers how to reactivate Autoland if needed.

During an Autoland activation, the Garmin Autothrottle system automatically manages aircraft speed and engine power so the aircraft can climb, descend or maintain altitude as needed. If temperatures are conducive to ice accumulation, Autoland activates anti-ice and deice systems for the engines and control surfaces. On approach to landing, the system initiates a controlled descent to the airport. If the aircraft needs additional time to descend or slow down during the approach, the Autoland system initiates a standard holding procedure. Once Autoland configures the landing gear and flaps, the aircraft begins its descent to the runway and lands. On the runway, automatic braking is applied while tracking the runway centerline to bring the aircraft to a complete stop. Engine shutdown is also automated so occupants can safely exit the aircraft.

New G1000 NXi features

With the latest G1000 NXi upgrades, King Air owners can take advantage of additional features.

Synthetic Vision Technology has been upgraded to include a 3D exocentric view of the SafeTaxi airport environment to aid situational awareness while taxiing. SVT also displays 3D building footprints, including hangars, terminals and towers, taxiways, aprons, signs and other markings to help reduce runway incursions by providing guidance while taxiing at airports contained in the SafeTaxi database. These SVT updates also increase topographical clarity, sharpened water and terrain boundaries, improved obstacle and powerlines display, enhanced runway and airport sign depiction and more.

Adding on to Garmin's electronic stability and protection technology, one engine inoperative ESP assists the pilot in maintaining control in the event of a single engine failure. ESP pitch and roll limits will adjust

to prevent excessive pitch or bank angles while the pilot performs single-engine procedures. The system also includes emergency descent mode as a standard feature that is enabled automatically in the event of a loss in aircraft pressurization.

Autoland and Autothrottle are now available for retrofit installations through the approved Garmin authorized dealer network for King Air 200 G1000 NXi installations. To learn more about the G1000 NXi upgrade and Autothrottle, visit *Garmin.com/kingair*. Find more about Autoland at *garmin.com/autonomi*.

Textron Aviation Expands Service Capabilities in Australia

Textron Aviation is expanding its service footprint in Australia for King Airs as well as other Beechcraft, Cessna and Hawker aircraft. The company has started work on a larger and modernized Melbourne Service Center and expects it to be fully functional in early 2026.

The new facility at Essendon Fields Airport will double the space of the current facility for servicing aircraft, aiding in faster scheduling with minimal downtime for customers seeking scheduled maintenance, modifications and aircraft-on-ground support. Essendon Fields Airport has been serving the southeastern region of Australia since 1921, making it one of the world's oldest operating airports.

Textron Aviation operates 11 North American service centers, nine international service centers and more than 60 mobile service units. 2025 marks five years since Textron Aviation established original equipment manufacturer support in Australia. In addition to Melbourne, the company provides customer support across the continent with operations in Perth at Jandakot Airport and Gold Coast at Gold Coast Airport. Find details at *txtav.com/service*.

Employees pose at Textron Aviation's Melbourne Service Center. The company is marking five years since it established OEM support on the Australian continent and also announced plans to expand the Melbourne facility.

European Distribution Center Is Textron Aviation's Second Largest

In a decade of providing parts support to Beechcraft, Cessna and Hawker customers in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, Textron Aviation's European Distribution Center in Düsseldorf, Germany, has grown into the company's second-largest parts distribution center, fulfilling more than 50 percent of all European parts orders.

"Since opening, our European Distribution Center has doubled in size, added a customer support parts and warranty team and quadrupled inventory value to continue providing unrivaled support in region," said Brad White, senior vice president, Global Parts Distribution. "Most recently, EUDC has increased stock keeping units (SKUs) by 40 percent, supporting less downtime for our customers and bolstering our commitment to provide the most robust services in the industry."

The 21,500 square feet (2,000m2) EUDC facility supports more than 20,000 SKUs available for same-day shipment. With a global network of seven parts distribution centers and 17 stockrooms, Textron Aviation Parts offers more than 150,000 unique part numbers in stock and one of the industry's latest cutoff times for shipping, with 99.99 percent same-day shipping on in-stock parts. Learn more at *parts.txtav.com*.

Textron Aviation Celebrates 10 Years at Interiors Manufacturing Facility

Textron Aviation recently marked the 10-year anniversary of its Interiors Manufacturing Facility in Wichita, Kansas. In 2015, the company acquired and rebranded the IMF facility. In 2024, the facility's footprint expanded to 16,000 square feet, allowing Textron Aviation to support the rising demand for custom interiors in King Airs and nearly every aircraft delivery.

The IMF campus is a state-of-the-art facility for aircraft interiors manufacturing. From side and overhead paneling and upholstery stitching to the cabinetry throughout the cabin, operators and artisans use advanced technology to create and personalize each interior furnishing.

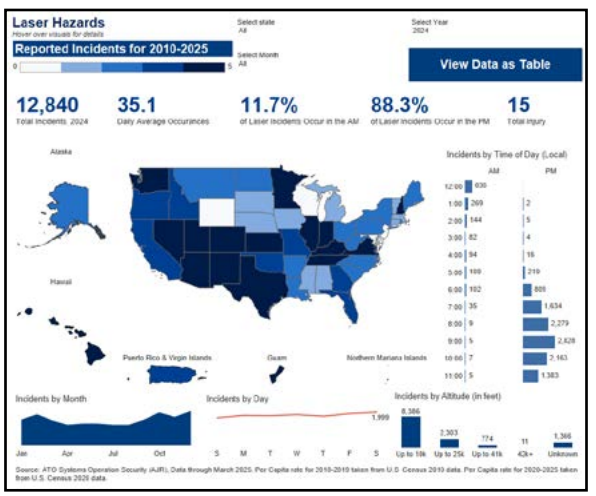
"For the past decade, the team at IMF has consistently demonstrated their expertise in designing luxurious and customized interiors for Cessna and Beechcraft aircraft," said Todd McKee, senior vice president, Integrated Supply Chain. Get additional information at *txtav.com*. KA

Laser Strikes on Aircraft Continue To Be Dangerously High

Pilots reported 12,840 laser strikes to the Federal Aviation Administration last year. While that is a 3% decrease from 2023, shining a laser at an aircraft poses a serious safety threat and is a federal crime. People who shine lasers at aircraft face FAA fines of up to $11,000 per violation and up to $30,800 for multiple laser incidents. Violators can also face federal criminal penalties of up to five years in prison and a $250,000 fine, as well as state and local penalties.

Pilots have reported 328 injuries since the FAA began tracking laser strike reports in 2010. In 2024, pilots reported the highest numbers of laser strikes in these states: California – 1,489, Texas – 1,463, Florida – 810, Tennessee – 649, Illinois – 622, Arizona – 550, New York – 531, Indiana – 512, Georgia – 416 and Virginia – 415.

The FAA encourages people to report laser strikes to the FAA at faa.gov/aircraft/safety/report/laserinfo/report_incident and to local law enforcement agencies. *Source: FAA*



To identify trends, the FAA's visualization tool shows laser-strike data from 2010 to present and highlights trends. The FAA shares the information with the public to draw attention to the dangerously high rate.

FAA Implements Program To Protect Pilots' Personal Information

The Federal Aviation Administration has implemented a program strongly advocated for by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association that allows aircraft owners to request that certain personal information be kept private, including their name and address.

AOPA advocated for pilot privacy in last year's FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024. As a result of this congressional action and the FAA's implementation, pilots can now submit a request through the Civil Aviation Registry Electronic Services to have their information withheld from public display on all FAA websites.

On a related note, AOPA President and CEO Darren Pleasance also sent a letter to acting FAA administrator Chris Rocheleau urging the agency to stand by its commitment to ensuring data emitted from an aviation safety tool onboard an aircraft, known as ADS-B, which allows aircraft and air traffic controllers to determine location, speed and other parameters, not be used by third parties to collect airport fees from private pilots.

Pleasance also noted that in addition to ADS-B data being used for billing pilots for airport fees without their consent, they "are increasingly being targeted with enforcement actions and frivolous lawsuits – things that are far from the ADS-B equipage mandate's original purpose." *Source: AOPA*

New President and CEO Takes Reins at GAMA

James A. Viola officially assumed the role of president and CEO of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association in March. Viola is GAMA's sixth president and CEO since its founding, 55 years ago; he succeeds Pete Bunce, who served as GAMA's president and CEO since 2005.

Viola came to GAMA from Vertical Aviation International, where he served as president and CEO

James Viola

since 2020. He led VAI in representing and supporting the interests of the global helicopter industry and other vertical aviation stakeholders. Additionally, Viola spearheaded the association's rebranding from Helicopter Association International to VAI, which widened the association's focus to encompass the rapid expansion and technological evolution occurring in vertical aviation.

Prior to VAI, Viola spent over a decade at the FAA. His last role at the agency was director of General Aviation Safety Assurance, where he was responsible for maintaining consistency and standardization in the application of safety oversight activities for the general aviation community. Additionally, Viola spent over two decades as a U.S. Army aviator, achieving the rank of colonel. He is an airline transport pilot and certified flight instructor for helicopters and airplanes and has accumulated more than 8,000 flight hours, including 1,100 with night-vision goggles. *Source: GAMA*

National Aviation Hall of Fame Honors GAMA CEO and Team

The National Aviation Hall of Fame announced that Pete Bunce, former president and CEO of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, and the GAMA team are the recipients of the 2025 Milton Caniff Spirit of Flight Award. The honor recognizes their collective leadership, advocacy and lasting contributions to the advancement of general aviation.

In making the announcement, NAHF said: *Under Pete Bunce's leadership, GAMA consistently championed safety, innovation and workforce development within the aviation sector while promoting the broader societal benefits of general aviation. Through initiatives like the Aviation Design Challenge, which engages high school students in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education through aviation-focused projects, and advocacy for sustainable aviation technologies, GAMA has inspired the next generation of aviators and innovators. Their commitment to fostering economic growth, enhancing safety standards, and supporting charitable aviation causes reflects a sustained dedication to serving national needs.*

The recipients will be honored during the President's Reception on Sept. 18 as part of the NAHF 61st Enshrinement Dinner and Ceremony in Wichita, Kansas. The 2025 enshrinees are Julie Clark, John Goglia, Mae Jemison, Gen. Lloyd "Fig" Newton (USAF Ret.), Phoebe Omlie and Frank Robinson. More than 500 people, including aviation enthusiasts, industry leaders and several returning enshrines, are expected to attend two days of events. The events are open to the public by advance registration only. *Source: nationalaviation.org* KA

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