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### EDITOR

MeLinda Schnyder

### EDITORIAL OFFICE

2779 Aero Park Dr.,  
Traverse City MI 49686  
Phone: 231-946-3712

Email: melinda@kingairmagazine.com

### PUBLISHERS

Dave Moore  
Village Publications

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

Rachel Coon

### PRODUCTION MANAGER

Mike Revard

### PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR

Jason Smith

### ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Jenna Reid  
King Air Magazine  
2779 Aero Park Drive  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
Phone: 816-699-8634  
E-mail: jenna.reid@vpdcs.com

### ADVERTISING ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR AND REPRINT SALES

Betsy Beaudoin  
Phone: 1-800-773-7798  
E-mail: betsybeaudoin@villagepress.com

### SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

Rhonda Kelly, Mgr.  
Jessica Meek  
Leah Backus  
P.O. Box 1810  
Traverse City, MI 49685  
1-800-447-7367

### ONLINE ADDRESS

www.kingairmagazine.com

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Courtesy of Mario Pereira

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# Avoiding the Plague

## Protect your air conditioning from Black Death

by Dean Benedict

**W**ith the summer months in full swing and your calendar chock full of vacation travel, you need the air conditioning in your King Air to be in top form. Now is not the time for a breakdown. The worst-case scenario would be a diagnosis of Black Death – a devastating condition that can wreck your A/C and necessitate the replacement of all components.

Black Death is yucky, disgusting gunk that gums up your A/C system, destroys your components and renders the A/C inoperable. Affected parts cannot be repaired; they must be replaced. Even the lines, if they cannot be flushed clean, must be replaced. This is a miserable and expensive process. Worse yet, the A/C compressor on the King Air 200 and 300 is on the right-hand engine. All the

plumbing goes through the wing root so the right-hand leading edge must come off. And that's just the beginning.

The crux of the problem is moisture in the system. A/C systems are sealed to keep moisture out. Whenever the system is “opened” to replace a switch or a component, a vacuum pump is used to remove all the air and the moisture from it before recharging the system with Freon.

## Moisture – the mortal enemy

Freon becomes acidic when mixed with moisture. Acid corrodes the aluminum in the condenser, the evaporator and certain parts of the compressor. In aircraft A/C systems, the lines (tubing) are aluminum and they also corrode. Think of the black residue on your rag after polishing the aluminum wheels on your car or the aluminum spinners on your King Air.

That's the black in Black Death. It eats away at an A/C system from the inside out. Corroded aluminum particles mix with the Freon and the oil in the system. This concoction is subjected to extremes of temperature and morphs into a thick, black sludge that, quite literally, chokes your A/C system to death.

## Freon R12 vs. R134a

Some think Black Death only affects R134a systems, but this is not true. Black Death can bring down an R12 system, too, if enough moisture gets in it.

R12 (aka dichlorodifluoromethane) boils at -21.6 degrees Fahrenheit. R134a (aka tetrafluoroethane) boils at the warmer temperature of -15.34 degrees Fahrenheit. This is why R134a doesn't cool as well as R12. Another difference is that R134a is slightly acidic to begin with. Adding moisture to R134a further increases its acidity. This could be why Black Death rears its ugly head more frequently in R134a systems – that along with the fact that there are fewer R12 systems around these days.

I was never a fan of converting R12 systems to R134a because R12 cools so much better. As long as I could procure R12 – good R12 – I kept servicing those systems. R12, although pricey, continues to be available today, but you have to search for a reputable supplier. That said, I must say the R134a systems in cars and airplanes today are greatly improved over the anemic systems when R134a first came on the scene.

## Freon – the good, the bad and the pretty (colored cylinders)

Ten years ago, I had a customer who owned a couple King Airs with R12 systems. He chafed at the cost of R12 so he brought me his own cylinders of Freon to use when servicing his A/C systems. I knew that he flew frequently to Mexico and assumed his R12 was purchased there, so I was careful not to mix his Freon with my own and suffer possible contamination. In refrigerant circles, Freon from Mexico and other countries had a reputation for impurities that muck up A/C systems. I once heard that Mexican R12 had butane added as a filler. Pure R12 is nonflammable.

There is nothing wrong with recycled Freon, whether it's R12 or R134a, as long as it is clean and pure. The air conditioning machines used by knowledgeable A/C technicians pull the Freon out of an A/C system and store it. The Freon is filtered during this process so it's safe



Most of us are used to seeing these color-coded refrigerant cylinders: R12 in white, R22 in light green and R134a in light blue. The refrigerant industry has recommended moving to a uniform gray-green color for all refrigerant cylinders.

to be reused. These machines have built-in sensors to indicate when the filters need to be changed.

Anyone buying Freon must (a) be licensed to do so and (b) be very discerning. My trusted supplier weighs each incoming cylinder of R12 before accepting it to ensure it's not tainted. Freon is heavier than air, so if any air is cut into the Freon to dilute it, the cylinder won't weigh enough.

Watch out for Freon substitutes. They can become highly corrosive. They often contain methyl chloride, which turns more acidic with less moisture than R134a.

Since the beginning of time (or at least the inception of Freon) refrigerant bottles were color coded. R12 always came in a white cylinder. R134a came in a light blue bottle. I have a bottle of R22 in my garage (for older residential A/C units) and the cylinder is light green.

The one odd exception to this rule is FR12, also known as FRIGC. FR12 is R134a with butane added. It was designed specifically for older cars manufactured with an R12 system. Strangely, FR12 also came in a white cylinder.

Once, when purchasing R12, I got a cylinder of FR12 by mistake. When I looked closely at the cylinder I saw the word tetrafluoroethane. This threw me for a loop – what's R134a doing in a white cylinder? Ah, well, I soon learned the cylinder itself is different. It has a funky, upside-down configuration unlike other refrigerant cylinders. When



A/C gauges are essential to service and troubleshoot air conditioning systems. These gauges are for an R12 system and are shown with R12 in its signature white cylinder.

my trusted supplier found out I was mistakenly given FR12 instead of R12, they were mortified. They promptly rectified the mistake and reorganized their warehouse to prevent it from happening again.

**Important note:** FR12 was never certified for use in aviation, so don't even think about it.

**Additional note:** The refrigerant industry has recommended phasing out color-coded cylinders in favor of a uniform gray-green color for all refrigerant cylinders. Flammable refrigerant cylinders will have a red stripe to aid fire and first responder personnel in differentiating between flammable and nonflammable products. However, many color-coded cylinders are still in circulation.

## Gauges and machines

A set of specialized gauges is required for any kind of work on an A/C system. They are to an A/C tech what a stethoscope is to a physician. I can discern high and low pressure readings, suction and so much more from these gauges. Everything having to do with air conditioning begins and ends with them.

For King Airs, I needed gauges for R12 systems and another set for R134a. The attach fittings are specific to

each type of Freon. The aircraft service ports, the Freon cylinders and the A/C machines all have corresponding fittings to one or the other. Nothing is interchangeable, which makes it impossible to accidentally put R134a into an R12 system.

An A/C recovery and recharge machine can suck the Freon out of a system, clean it by filtration, store it and charge it back into the aircraft after the necessary repairs have been made.

## Mercury and microns – evacuating the system

A vacuum pump is used to evacuate the Freon from a system, then a stronger vacuum is applied to purge the system of moisture. This vacuum is left on for a longer period. Moisture boils more readily under vacuum, and once the moisture has boiled away, the dry air is pulled out by vacuum.

The King Air manual calls for a vacuum pump that pulls at least 29 Hg (inches of mercury) and 125 microns. A proper A/C machine in good condition meets this criteria. Back in the day, I had access to a vacuum pump that pulled 250 microns. I used this pump after repairing large leaks to ensure I got all the moisture out.

The manual also states the system must be left under vacuum for up to four hours. I tend to leave a King Air system under vacuum for much longer. Whenever possible, I leave A/C systems on vacuum overnight.

## Open systems invite trouble

I'm very particular about not leaving the system "open" while waiting for replacement parts to arrive. After troubleshooting and identifying the problem – let's say it's a bad expansion valve – I do not remove the bad valve. I wait until I have the new valve in my hot little hand before I remove the old one. The system is only open during the time it takes to remove and replace the expansion valve. This keeps the amount of air (moisture) entering the system to a bare minimum, and this is crucial in the world of A/C repair.

If an A/C system were left open for a period of time, for whatever reason, I would automatically change the receiver-drier. It contains a desiccant. Receiver-driers come with plugs on both ends. I never remove those plugs until just before I install it; otherwise, the desiccant starts pulling moisture from the ambient air, reducing the effectiveness of the new receiver-drier.

For me, changing the receiver-drier is a good maintenance practice whenever an A/C system is "opened" for any reason.

## Confession

I went to air conditioning school when I worked for an automotive shop during high school. In the decades >



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since, I've worked on a wide variety of auto and aircraft A/C systems, but lucky for me, I've never dealt directly with a system infected with Black Death. I have consulted with several shops when they encountered it and walked them through the remedial processes.

My partner in crime for A/C troubleshooting and repair hasn't dealt with Black Death in his long career either. (He was my source for the vacuum pump that pulls 250 microns.) Together we've worked on King Air A/C systems that others gave up for dead, but none with Black Death. Some of those King Airs lived in the desert, but others lived in coastal or humid environments.

Many might assume that the dry desert climate in which I've lived and worked for many years is the reason I never ran into Black Death, since the condition thrives on moisture. But I don't know if that tells the whole story.

Here's what I do know: My A/C buddy and I are on the same page regarding pulling vacuum – the more time, the better. When it comes to purging moisture from A/C systems, we routinely exceed the maintenance manual requirements for time under vacuum. And we're vigilant on keeping systems closed until the replacement part is in hand, ready for install.

## What can you do?

If your King Air is in the shop with an A/C squawk, don't be in a hurry. Allow time.

Consider this typical scenario: Your A/C is inop and you have a trip coming up. You get your King Air to the shop at the last minute for a quick fix. They troubleshoot it and find the compressor is bad. They get a new one coming, but they know you're in a hurry so they take the old one off in preparation for replacement. The system sits open for one to two days. The shop receives and installs the new compressor as soon as it arrives; then they suck the system down with vacuum for an hour or so. They check for leaks and find none, so they top off the Freon and send you on your way. Most likely your A/C will blow ice cubes, at least initially, but the door was opened for moisture to get into the system. This will hamper A/C performance down the road and increase your risk of developing Black Death.

If you find your A/C blows cold, then warms up, then gets cold again, get your aircraft to a shop immediately. In my experience, such intermittent cooling indicates moisture in the system. A/C techs can diagnose this with their gauges. If you're really pressed for time or far from



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home base, you can have the A/C serviced with Freon as a stopgap measure only. Just don't leave it at that. You are not out of the woods yet.

As soon as you can schedule it, put the aircraft down for a thorough check and fix of the A/C. Allow time for your system to be leak-checked and thoroughly evacuated. Request your system be kept closed while waiting for parts to ship in. Request that the plugs on a new receiver-drier be left in place until the moment it is installed. If you get any pushback on these suggestions, call me. I'll be happy to assist in any way I can.

### The good guys

Besides patience, you need a shop with a good A/C tech. Anyone can throw Freon in a system, but proper servicing and effective troubleshooting require specialized equipment, a good grasp of the principles of air conditioning and experience. A good A/C tech will have all three, plus they will know where to source quality Freon.

I'm in a pickle here, because there are good guys out there who know what they're doing and they go by the book. I don't want to give the impression that I prevented Black Death by going beyond the book requirements. That could be a factor but I don't know it for a fact. I do know that extended vacuum time has worked for me and I don't see a downside to it.

The bottom line is that an A/C system contaminated with moisture won't function properly and if not addressed effectively, Black Death could develop. That is a risk you do not want to take with your King Air. Moisture in the system can result from a variety of situations: a humid climate, bad Freon, a leaky system, a system left open to the air, insufficient time on vacuum, a weak or faulty vacuum pump. Any of these factors could contribute to the rise of Black Death in a King Air A/C system.

Your goal is to keep your cool with great-running A/C. How do you achieve that goal? Get and keep moisture out of your King Air A/C system! 

---

Dean Benedict is a certified A&P, AI with over 50 years of experience in King Air maintenance. He was an inaugural inductee to the King Air Hall of Fame in 2022. He received the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award from the FAA in 2025. He owned and ran Honest Air Inc., a Beechcraft maintenance boutique with a strong following of King Airs, for 15 years. Currently, with BeechMedic LLC, Dean and his wife, Lisa, consult with King Air owners, pilots and mechanics on maintenance issues, troubleshooting and pre-buys. Dean performs expert witness work on request. He can be reached at [dr.dean@beechmedic.com](mailto:dr.dean@beechmedic.com) or 702-524-4378.



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Left: Chris Crisman/TNC/LightHawk; Right: Lincoln Athas/WCCI/LightHawk



# Reduced Power Takeoffs, Minimum Acceptable Power & Verifying Max Torque

by Zach Cleaver

“Can I perform a reduced power takeoff to save wear and tear on my engines?”

We get this question fairly frequently at King Air Academy and the short answer is no, you can't do a reduced power takeoff. Naturally, the follow-up question is “Why?”

We don't have charts that give us the performance numbers we need to make a safe decision. Beechcraft has never published reduced power takeoff data for King Airs. Without that data we don't know how our plane is going to perform given the conditions in which we are flying. If you choose to perform a reduced power takeoff, you are becoming a test pilot.

Speaking of knowing if our performance data is accurate, how do we know that our aircraft can meet the requirements of the flight? Before we fly, we check takeoff distances, accelerate/stop distances, climb gradients and single-engine performance, among others. All those charts have been created by the manufacturer so that we know what to expect and plan for during our flight. However, what makes those charts true after they have been created? Our performance data is based on

minimum acceptable power being produced by our engines. How do we know what that is? We have a chart for that!

## The minimum takeoff power chart

This chart tells us the minimum amount of torque we need to produce from our engines to make our performance charts true.

Figures 1 and 2 (next page) are for a King Air B200 (BB-1439; BB-1444 thru BB-1842, except BB-1463 & BB-1834; BL-139 thru BL-147; BW-1 thru BW-29). Make sure you are using the appropriate charts for your model and any modifications made to it when making your calculations.

Please read the notes carefully; they contain important information.

Note No. 1 on both charts says that torque will increase approximately 20 ft-lbs from zero to 65 knots. Why is this important? As we increase speed, air going into the engine compresses slightly giving us ram rise – a small increase in torque. The chart is valid, in this example, at 65 knots.

But what is this telling us? It says that at our field temperature and pressure altitude we should produce X

**MINIMUM TAKE-OFF POWER AT 2000 RPM  
WITH ICE VANES RETRACTED  
(65 KNOTS)**

- NOTES: 1. TORQUE INCREASES APPROXIMATELY 20 FT-LBS FROM ZERO TO 65 KNOTS.  
2. THE POWER (TORQUE) INDICATED IS THE MINIMUM VALUE AT 65 KNOTS FOR WHICH TAKE-OFF PERFORMANCE IN THIS SECTION CAN BE OBTAINED. TORQUE WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE ABOVE 65 KNOTS.

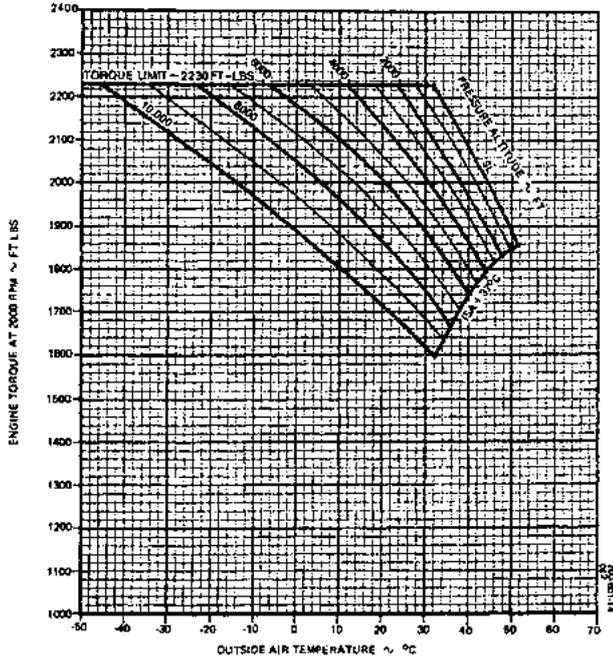


Figure 1

**MINIMUM TAKE-OFF POWER  
WITH ICE VANES EXTENDED  
(65 KNOTS)**

- NOTES: 1. TORQUE INCREASES APPROXIMATELY 20 FT-LBS FROM ZERO TO 65 KNOTS.  
2. THE POWER (TORQUE) INDICATED IS THE MINIMUM VALUE AT 65 KNOTS FOR WHICH TAKE-OFF PERFORMANCE IN THIS SECTION CAN BE OBTAINED. TORQUE WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE ABOVE 65 KNOTS.  
3. TAKE-OFF WITH VANES EXTENDED IS PROHIBITED IN SHADED AREA.

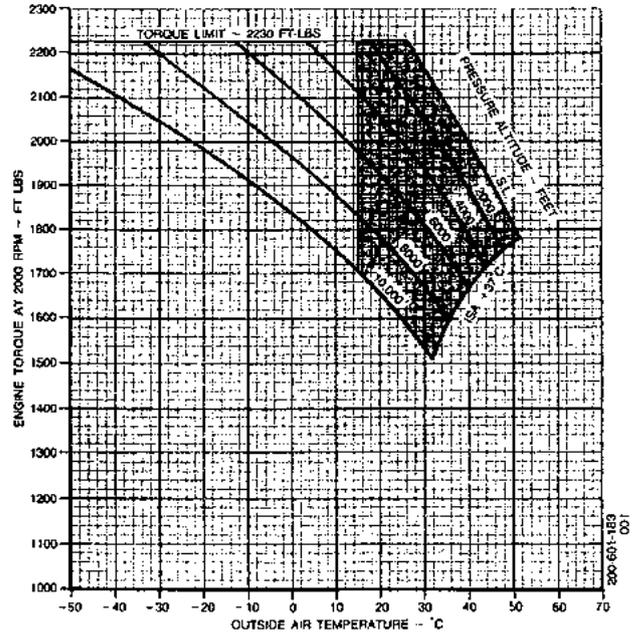


Figure 2

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						@12,000 LBS		@11,000 LBS		@10,000 LBS	
FEET	°C	°C	FT-LBS	LBS/HR	LBS/HR	IAS	TAS	IAS	TAS	IAS	TAS
SL	20	15	2230	473	946	238	239	239	240	240	241
2000	17	11	2230	469	918	236	244	237	245	238	246
4000	13	7	2230	446	892	234	249	235	250	238	250
6000	9	3	2230	433	866	231	263	232	254	233	255
8000	5	-1	2230	421	842	229	258	230	269	231	260
10,000	2	-5	2230	410	820	227	263	228	264	229	265
12,000	-2	-9	2230	400	800	224	268	226	270	226	271
14,000	-5	-13	2230	393	786	222	274	223	275	224	276
16,000	-8	-17	2230	388	776	219	279	220	280	221	282
18,000	-13	-21	2230	385	770	216	284	217	286	219	287
20,000	-17	-25	2143	368	739	210	285	212	287	213	289
22,000	-21	-28	2043	350	700	203	285	205	288	207	290
24,000	-25	-33	1920	328	666	198	284	198	287	200	290
26,000	-29	-37	1789	305	610	187	281	190	286	192	288
28,000	-33	-41	1664	281	582	176	277	181	282	184	285
29,000	-35	-42	1588	270	540	173	275	177	280	178	284
31,000	-40	-46	1460	249	498	164	270	167	275	171	280
33,000	-44	-50	1334	229	458	153	261	158	269	162	275
35,000	-48	-54	1204	209	418	139	246	146	260	152	268

BT03380

Figure 3

amount of torque before becoming ITT limited. If we produce or exceed the amount of torque required by the chart (at 65 knots), then our performance calculations will be true. If we don't, then our performance numbers will not be accurate and cannot be relied upon.

Notice that Figure 2, showing ice vanes extended, has a large grey area. The 200 series cannot have its ice vanes extended above 15 degrees Celsius. Take a look at the different minimum acceptable torque numbers between the two charts. On the ice vanes retracted chart (Figure 1), you would expect to make maximum torque before becoming ITT limited for a 10 degrees Celsius day at a pressure altitude of 4,000 feet. Using the same temperature and pressure altitude on the ice vanes extended chart (Figure 2) results in a minimum acceptable torque of 2,160 ft-lbs before becoming ITT limited. If you cannot make the minimum torque at 65 knots then you do not know if your airplane is capable of performing the way you expect it to.

Finally, one of the things that many pilots do is use a slightly lower than maximum power setting in cruise to help preserve their engines. This a normal and accepted practice. What is not done nearly as often is checking to make sure you are producing book torque and speed in cruise. Why do we need to check this? It tells us if our engines are working the way they are supposed to.

**The maximum cruise power chart**

Figure 3 (above left) shows the maximum cruise power chart for a King Air B200; please use the appropriate chart for your aircraft.

This chart shows that at FL240 on an ISA day, you should be able to set 1,920 ft-lbs torque without exceeding ITT limitations. This should result in an indicated air speed of 196 and a true air speed of 284 knots at 12,000 lbs. If you cannot achieve book speeds and torques it might be worth looking into. Be aware that some common modifications to King Airs will alter an aircraft's speed, such as wing lockers, high float gear, extra antennas, etc.

Remember, don't be a test pilot. Make sure your engines are producing enough power to make your performance charts true. The max speed check is an indicator of your engine's health, so check it once in a while. **KA**

Zach Cleaver, a Gold Seal flight instructor since 2009, started teaching in King Airs in 2010. He has worked for King Air Academy in Phoenix, Arizona, since 2013 and flies all models of King Airs.

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# A First Time King Air Buyer's Story

From an engine fire while traversing South American mountains to missed purchase deadlines and buying two aircraft to ensure getting one, read about Dr. Mario Pereira's path to owning a King Air C90A.

by Grant Boyd



# Story



**T**he story of Dr. Mario Pereira locating and ultimately buying a 1990 Beechcraft King Air C90A (LJ-1251) is not a short one. But it is an interesting tale that involves an engine fire and emergency landing at a high-elevation airport in South America, non-refundable deposits put toward multiple King Airls and missed year-end aircraft purchase deadlines.

This story begins like so many others, with a young boy enthralled by flight. Since learning to fly after becoming a physician and immigrating to the United States from El Salvador, Pereira has owned and operated three aircraft. He transitioned from a single-engine Cirrus SR22T to a twin-engine Diamond DA-62 in July 2020.

“First of all, I embrace change. I think that changing, upgrading and seeking higher levels of training to move to more capable platforms is part of the passion for aviation,” Pereira said. “And when the situation is lined up with a business necessity, then that’s the perfect scenario. When you sit down and start looking at numbers, you see that it may be time to upgrade to something bigger, faster and more capable.”

## **A clear case for a business aircraft**

As an internal medicine specialist, Pereira uses an airplane to visit hospitals across Florida from his base at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (KFXE). He also uses it to support his family’s customs brokerage, freight forwarding and logistics company that’s been operating since 1963, Agencia Padilla Tablas SA de CV.

About five years ago, his workload as an internist increased, leading him to spend up to 10 days a month away from home.



Mario Pereira uses his King Air to visit hospitals across Florida, as well as to visit El Salvador in support of the operations of his family's brokerage, freight forwarding and logistics company.

"I may have to be in Fort Lauderdale until 6 p.m. [working] on Friday before going to dinner with my family and then need to be in Orlando or Panama City the next morning," he explained. "So, you need a dependable airplane that's going to be ready and that's going to get you there quicker. We started flying a lot more often and were pushing 400 hours a year on the DA-62 and began running into a lot of unscheduled maintenance. I felt like the plane wasn't made for that kind of abuse."

Several unplanned downtime events caused him to begin considering upgrading to another aircraft. Multiple engine control unit failures, which resulted in a reduction to 65% power during initial climb, were particularly concerning and led Pereira to consider other options.



Mario Pereira is often joined in the King Air by his family, particularly when flying to El Salvador. This photo taken by daughter Sofia, shows Pereira with daughter Andrea.

"The last nail in the coffin wasn't a design problem but more of a maintenance-induced failure," he said. "Forty-five minutes from El Salvador, we had an engine fire while going over the mountains. We were in IFR conditions when we lost power in the left engine. Black smoke started coming out of the cowl and we had to land down to minimums on one engine. That was quite an experience."

The mechanics were as puzzled by the retrofitted automotive engines as they would have been by an alien spacecraft's propulsion system, Pereira recalled. Even with their decades of expertise with multiple airframes, they had to call in factory support to even begin diagnosing the issue. That's when he decided that a key feature of his next aircraft would be system familiarity.

"Let's get a robust, industrial beast that can take the beating, where we can find parts everywhere and if you take it to a mechanic in Latin America they won't be surprised," he recalled thinking.

Three Pratt-powered options were on the table: Pilatus PC-12s, TBMs and King Airs. At that point, Pereira had already logged several hundred hours from the right seat of King Airs and PC-12s.

"We almost pulled the trigger on a TBM 850, but just the feeling of having one engine and flying three hours over vast amounts of water when flying to El Salvador made me and my wife a little nervous," he said. "Two engines made the whole family feel a lot more comfortable."

He narrowed in on the King Air and considered the F90 and C90.

"We shied away from the F90, though, because of the landing gear and the electrical system, which is not quite as good as the C90's [the triple-fed version that is also on the 350]. We decided to go with simple, convenient and dependable technology," he said.

## Jockeying for a C90 to purchase

Once the decision was made, the race was on to find an airworthy C90 to close on before the end of the year. Well, Pereira wished for one and wound up with two aircraft, although not in his ideal time frame.

“We first went into contract for LJ-1251 in September and put a nice chunk of cash down,” he explained. “Inspections went perfectly, except the [magnesium] ailerons needed to be replaced, as they were corroded. At the time, there was a 24-month waiting period from the factory. We ordered the STC replacement option made of aluminum, which was set to arrive in a shorter time frame.”

He got nervous with December approaching and began considering other options he'd been casually studying.

“There was a Venezuelan-registered aircraft that was that was in pristine condition, with 400 hours on the engines. It was perfect and we were told it was deregistered and just waiting on an N number. It turns out the paperwork wasn't filed correctly and what should have taken a week took much longer, and I started panicking again,” he said, recalling that this led him to make a Dec. 30 Hail Mary attempt. “We found another that was ready to go and made an offer, put money down and somebody else won the bid. I was so upset.”

## Transitioning to the King Air C90A

Pereira closed on LJ-1251 in January 2023 and walked away from the former Venezuelan aircraft once the registration was completed in June. You can learn a lot about an aircraft before purchasing one, he advised, but the real uncovering happens after you take possession of the airplane.

“The jump from the DA-62 to this King Air has been quite an eye-opener in many ways,” he said. “Owning and operating a King Air is much more complex than just being a weekend flyer, taking a Cirrus or



The King Air's two turboprops ease the Pereira family's anxiety when making frequent multi-hour trips over water to El Salvador.

a DA-62 for a \$100 burger trip. You have to eat, breathe and sleep King Air 24/7. It should not be considered a demanding endeavor, but rather a necessary and enjoyable experience. The moment it becomes a chore, that's when you start cutting corners and mistakes happen.”

Pereira follows the mantra that if you treat your airplane right, it will return the favor.

“Commonly, this type of aircraft will have a pilot who may or may not be directly involved in the maintenance and ownership,” he said. “This takes a totally different approach when you are both the one flying and managing the aircraft – every expense comes directly out of your own wallet. Knowledge of the aircraft's maintenance schedule, tracking of maintenance items and having a good understanding of the systems on your aircraft help you stay ahead of maintenance and not behind. Poor management of this aspect results in disruption of operations, affecting business and the aircraft's proper use. And it can

also result in unwanted failures, incidents and accidents that can often be unforgiving.”

Of course, Pereira understood all of the above before the purchase. Something he heard less about, though, was the need to acquire new fixtures to support the aircraft's operation.

“Tooling of your hangar is an often-forgotten item in the list when planning to buy an aircraft,” he said. “[You must acquire] equipment used for day-to-day operations and periodic maintenance procedures, such as compressor wash procedures, which can often be deferred to a maintenance team but at a very high cost. Tooling of the hangar also represents a cost that should be anticipated. My grandfather used to say: the bigger the boy, the bigger the toy. [This is true] when it comes to towing equipment, GPU, washing equipment, ladders for routine inspections, hangar space, etc.”

Outside of the aileron backorder when initially purchasing the aircraft, Pereira has had good



Mario Pereira recently completed an interior refurbishment of his King Air C90A, preparing it for many more years of productive flying. Some of the materials used are shown in the photo on the right, including sheepskin and new carpeting.

luck overall in the maintenance department. But the aircraft recently had a cracked right-hand windshield. As he recounted, there was stock available at dealers, but the asking price was nearly 10 times what the factory charges. While there was no stock on hand at Textron Aviation when he initially inquired, Pereira is happy to report that through a relationship with a Textron Aviation sales manager he was able to get a replacement part.

“We are a medical healthcare group. We are the little guy and operate with a lot of sacrifice and

effort,” he said. “We don’t operate a fleet of planes, have deep pockets, buy/sell airplanes or own a stash of parts. All we needed was a windshield so we could continue our day-to-day operations, and we had one two weeks later.”

### Investing in LJ-1251

The C90A can make the family’s frequent flights to El Salvador nonstop in about four hours and 15 minutes, with a little over an hour of fuel left in the tank. The dispatchability of the aircraft makes

Pereira and his wife feel more confident that they will be able to make the now monthly trip without interruption to support Agencia Padilla Tablas.

“Getting there [900 nautical miles away] that quickly is not pushing it,” he said. “I like to keep my engines running at low temps, and I don’t go up to 30,000 feet because the -21s are temperature limited once you get over 22,000 feet. They start running out of air and getting hot, so I try to fly between 18,000 and 22,000 feet ideally.

“The engines are super economical, and I can be doing 240 knots at the right altitude, burning 90 gallons the first hour, 70 the second and almost down to 55 in the third and fourth hours. It’s crazy how economical these engines are. And there’s an old saying with the King Airs: If the door closes, it will fly. They have a great payload.”

When Pereira purchased the airplane two and a half years ago, the interior and exterior were in good condition. It had a new Garmin avionics suite, although still with a

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“Owning and operating a King Air is much more complex than just being a weekend flyer, taking a Cirrus or a DA-62 for a \$100 burger trip.”

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Collins APS 65, which he believes is superior in reliability and cost compared to the Garmin GFC 700.

He said he is going to continue investing in the aircraft outside of what is required by the book, to ensure the King Air operates at its best.

“We have performed a facelift of the interior to freshen it up, with new sheepskin cockpit seats, as well as new carpeting and sidewalls, LED lighting throughout, freshly overhauled four-blade props and a new Garmin radar,” Pereira said, noting that E & A Interiors at KFXE completed the work. “Hot sections are coming up next year, and the gear is due then as well. I think we have a plane that will last us a good while.”

Seeing the finished product has made Pereira reconsider his next move.

“The King Air is still doing our mission great, don’t get me wrong,” he said. “But we have started talking about getting an Embraer Phenom 100, a Cessna Citation M2 or a Beechcraft Premier 1A. I think we are down to the Phenom, but my family weighs in a lot and feels that they would be sacrificing the room and comfort [in the back] of the current plane. The King Air will spoil you in that sense, and my family prefers to be stretched out and more comfortable while going a little slower, rather than going faster and higher.”

So, the C90 is the answer ... for now.

“The King Air is not only a solid platform – robust, versatile and dependable – it’s an icon and an institution in the world of aviation,” he said. “It is a great transition to jets, but also difficult to find one that will accomplish the wide range of missions the King Air is capable of.” **KA**

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Grant Boyd holds a doctorate of education and is a private pilot and business aviation professional with a passion for writing. His background includes aviation marketing, communications, customer service and sales roles.



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Freshly overhauled four-blade props are among the updates Mario Pereira has made to his 1990 C90A since purchasing the aircraft in 2023.

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Recent interior work on LJ-1251 included new sheepskin cockpit seats, carpeting and sidewalls, and LED lighting throughout the aircraft.



## ForeFlight Introduces Dynamic Procedures for IFR Flying

ForeFlight demonstrated its new Dynamic Procedures at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh in late July and planned to release the streamlined solution for viewing instrument procedures after the event. The new feature will launch with a three-month free preview for all customers in supported regions, and then Dynamic Procedures will require the essential or higher subscription plan.

Officials said this new capability, integrated directly into the familiar Maps view, provides pilots with critical procedural information exactly when and where they need it, while removing non-relevant details to create a highly filtered and clutter-free presentation.

“Dynamic Procedures is a milestone toward a fully interactive, chart-free IFR experience,” Travis Root, ForeFlight vice president of product said in a news release. “Instead of redrawing a traditional chart, we provide pilots just the procedure details they need in concert with our primary data-driven map – filtering the procedure to what is relevant, yet keeping it in context with weather, traffic, terrain and obstacles. It’s the easiest way to brief an approach – and to quickly reference it again as part of your scan.”

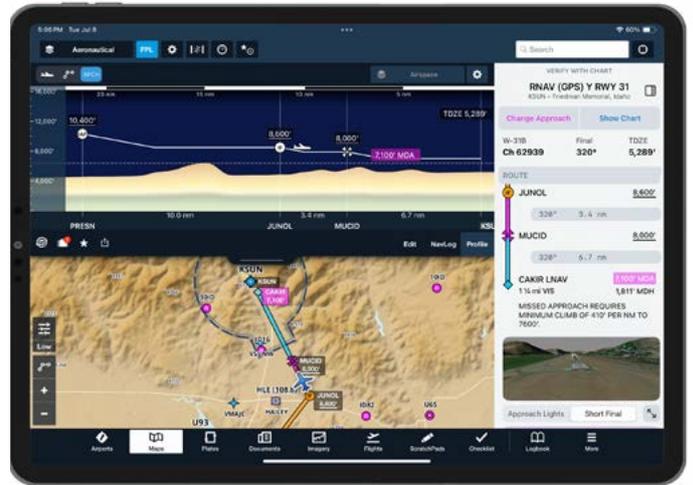
Dynamic Procedures relies on foundational IFR capabilities built by ForeFlight over the years, with advancements including Plates on Maps, Procedure Advisor and Augmented Procedures with fix labels displayed along the route and dynamic approach minimum selection.

### Streamlined workflow with a procedure sidebar

The new Dynamic Procedures sidebar provides a clean, collapsible information display panel with all the information necessary to brief and fly an instrument approach in one place. Because it is context-aware, it presents just the information you need in a highly structured and streamlined format, and it integrates other existing features like 3D View to provide value above and beyond any pre-composed chart.

Sidebar features include:

- Change Approach and Hide Chart buttons make it easy to view or hide the sidebar and access other approach options with a single tap.
- A consolidated briefing strip pins essential procedure information to the top for easy access.
- Communication frequencies are clearly organized for quick reference.



ForeFlight’s Dynamic Procedures offers a chartless flight experience to help instrument pilots stay focused on situational awareness.

- Notes are intelligently filtered to show only the information that applies to your current approach.
- The dynamic route display provides heading and distance metrics, per-segment speed and altitude restrictions, as well as additional notes for special segments like course reversals and arcs.
- Integrated 3D Airport view allows the user to preview the runway environment and approach lighting systems from two simulated perspectives. Toggle between Approach Lights and Short Final views, and quickly open the airport in the full 3D view to switch between night and day modes, providing a complete picture of the runway’s approach lighting configuration as well as local terrain and obstacles.

Dynamic Procedures is powered by Jeppesen’s global aviation data. Initial coverage includes all 50 U.S. states, Canada and the Pacific Islands, with expanded support already in the works. *Source: foreflight.com*

## TBO Increase to 3,600 Hours or Six Years for the Silent 7 MT-Propeller Series

In July, MT-Propeller announced an increase to the time between overhaul for 7-blade propellers, including those installed on the Beechcraft King Air 350 series.

The company said several props from the 130 flying Silent 7 propellers were inspected based on the certification requirements after 2,000 hours in service.

“The propellers showed basically no wear or abnormalities,” MT-Propeller said in a news release. “Due to these excellent inspection results, the engineering team at MT-Propeller was able to increase the TBO for the 7-bladed propellers – presently installed on the Pilatus PC-12 series, the King Air 350 series and the Short Skyvan – to 3,600 hours or six years, whichever comes first.”

MT-Propeller is a leading natural composite propeller manufacturer with 30 certified propeller models from 2-blade to 7-blade hydraulically and electrically controlled variable-pitch props as well as 2-blade, fixed-pitch props.

The high performance, light weight and durable propellers fulfill the highest certification requirements; they are also supplemental type certified on Part 25 aircraft. MT-Propeller is holder of more than 230 STCs worldwide, and the company said it is the OEM supplier for more than 90% of the European aircraft industry plus 30% of the U.S. aircraft industry. More than 33,000 propeller systems are in service and have accumulated 180 million fleet hours.

There is a factory certified network of 62 service centers providing service and maintenance across the globe.  
 Source: [mt-propeller.com](http://mt-propeller.com) 



MT-Propeller's 7-blade prop shown on a King Air 350 was at the 2025 King Air Gathering.

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# New Multi-Mission King Air Demonstrator Debuts

**P**art of Textron Aviation's static display in June at the 2025 Paris Air Show was a new multi-mission Beechcraft King Air demonstration aircraft. The aircraft – which was making its show and European debut – is a 360C model equipped to showcase a wide range of missions available on the versatile King Air platform.

The new King Air demo, powered by PT6A-67A engines with dual oil coolers, is fitted with:

- extended range fuel tanks,
- a factory-installed extended utility nose capable of housing a variety of sensors up to a 20-inch EO/IR sensor and a lift kit to retract,
- factory-installed wing hardpoint provisions and
- a cargo door that supports air ambulance and freight operations to enhance mission flexibility.

Interior features include:

- a mission rack with displays and a mission computer,
- original equipment manufacturer VIP seating,
- AvFab and LifePort mission seats,
- a LifePort medevac stretcher and
- a cockpit compatible with night vision imaging systems.

“The King Air's acquisition and operation cost, combined with excellent speed, range and payload capacity make it an excellent value for a wide range of special missions,” Bob Gibbs, vice president, Special Missions Sales, said in a news release.

The worldwide fleet of 7,800 King Air turboprops has surpassed 66 million flight hours since 1964. Among the many operators across the globe are government, military and other customers needing airborne solutions for critical missions. **KA**





### Legislation Introduced to Stop ADS-B Misuse

Companion bills introduced by Congress seek to address growing concerns about the misuse of ADS-B flight tracking data that has been increasingly used by some airports and state governments to collect fees from pilots.

U.S. Sen. Ted Budd, R-N.C., drafted the Pilot and Aircraft Privacy Act while U.S. Rep. Bob Onder, R-Mo., introduced the PAPA Act of 2025.

The bills seek to:

- Prohibit the use of ADS-B data to assist in the collection of fees from pilots or aircraft owners.
- Clarify that ADS-B data may only be used for its intended purposes of air traffic safety and efficiency.
- Give the Secretary of Transportation the discretion to authorize other uses of ADS-B data.
- Expand, to all federal, state and local entities, a provision in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 preventing investigations from being initiated based solely on ADS-B data.
- Require public-use airports to make transparent the impact of any new fees on general aviation and businesses and require any imposed landing fees be used for airside safety improvements.

“On behalf of AOPA, I want to thank Sen. Budd and Rep. Onder for leading on this important aviation safety issue. Both are active private pilots and understand that using ADS-B data for economic reasons clearly undermines the FAA’s 2020 ADS-B safety mandate intended to provide situational awareness of an aircraft’s position for air traffic control purposes,” AOPA President and CEO Darren Pleasance said in a statement.

General aviation pilots spent more than \$600 million dollars complying with the FAA’s 2020 safety mandate, according to AOPA, and were assured that ADS-B would only be used for improving safety and efficiency in the National Airspace System.

Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte recently signed into law legislation championed by state Rep. Shane Klakken that would prevent airports in Montana from using ADS-B data to collect landing fees. Similar legislation has also been introduced in the Minnesota legislature.

“We appreciate the recognition this issue is receiving at the state level, but we do want to avoid a patchwork of laws across the country and that is why these bills in Congress are so important,” Pleasance said. *Source: aopa.org*

### Reaction to New FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford

In July, Congress confirmed Bryan Bedford as the next Federal Aviation Administration administrator, where he will lead 40,000 employees working to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the national airspace system.

Bedford holds a multi-engine, instrumented-rated private pilot license and brings more than 35 years of aviation experience to the FAA, including 26 years as CEO of Republic Airways. His previous jobs include president and chief executive of Mesaba Airlines, president and chief executive officer of Business Express Airlines, chief financial officer of Phoenix Airline Services and chief financial officer for West Air Airlines. He graduated from Florida State University with a bachelor’s degree in finance and accounting.

Here’s what the leaders of general aviation’s organizations had to say:

Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association President Darren Pleasance: “We congratulate Administrator Bedford



on his confirmation and look forward to working together to strengthen general aviation and advance the modernization of our nation's air traffic control system. Being both an airline executive and pilot gives Bryan a unique and valuable perspective on the entire aviation ecosystem.”

Experimental Aircraft Association CEO and Chairman of the Board Jack J. Pelton: “We congratulate Bryan Bedford on his confirmation as the new Administrator for the FAA. There is a long list of challenges as we seek to maintain America’s aviation infrastructure and air traffic system as the finest in the world and preserve the freedom of flight for individuals who want to be involved in any facet of aviation.”

General Aviation Manufacturers Association President and CEO James Viola: “GAMA congratulates FAA Administrator Bedford on his confirmation. His decades of industry experience and knowledge, combined with his strong leadership skills, will be called upon to strengthen the agency and oversee the modernization of U.S aviation technology infrastructure. We are eager to work with the administrator and the

entire FAA team during this critical time as we work together to strengthen aviation safety and advance innovation. Additionally, we thank Chris Rocheleau for his leadership and service as Acting Administrator and we look forward to continuing our work with him as FAA Deputy Administrator.”

National Business Aviation Association President and CEO Ed Bolen: “We welcome Bryan Bedford’s confirmation to lead the FAA, where his strategic thinking, extensive leadership experience and consistent focus on safety will guide the agency and industry in working together on the development of a robust and resilient ATC network. We look forward to working with Bryan to ensure that the United States continues to operate the world’s largest, safest, most diverse aviation system.” 



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# Travel Air

## Homecoming and Centennial Celebration

Text and photos by MeLinda Schnyder

**R**estorers and owners of Travel Air aircraft were invited to fly to Wichita, Kansas, to honor the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Travel Air Airplane Manufacturing Company, which built nearly 1,500 aircraft in the city from 1925 to 1931. After their time at Travel Air, pioneering leaders Walter Beech, Clyde Cessna and Lloyd Stearman went on to birth three companies: Beech Aircraft Company, Cessna Aircraft Company and Stearman Aircraft Company.

Homecoming organizer Jerry Impellezzeri, who formed the Travel Air Restorers Association type club in the early 1980s, reported that 14 aircraft flew in for at least part of the weekend activities July 10-13. This was the most Travel Air aircraft gathered in one location since the 1930s, he said. There are nearly 125 Travel Airs currently on the FAA registry and an estimated 65 still flying.

Here's a look at four of the nearly century-old aircraft that made a public appearance July 12 at Wichita's Colonel James Jabara Airport (KAAO).





**1927 Travel Air E-4000, N-number 4321, serial number 374**

Owned by Stu MacPherson of Orcas Island, Washington

Cap'n Mac also owns a 1930 Travel Air; learn more at [orcasbiplanerides.com](http://orcasbiplanerides.com).



**1928 Travel Air 4000, N-number 5424, serial number 513**

Owned by David Mars of Madison, Mississippi

David, who copilots a King Air 350, gives flights from his airstrip and Madison Airport (KMBO).





**1929 Travel Air D-4000, N-number 8708, serial number 926**

Owned by Keith Kossuth of Chino, California

Learn more about this Southern California-based airplane at [barnstormersbiplanerides.com](http://barnstormersbiplanerides.com).







**1928 Travel Air E-4000, N-number 9079, serial number 861**

Owned by Andrew King of Culpeper, Virginia

Andrew's Travel Air features one of the most complete original cockpits; get details of its history at [biplanerides1.com](http://biplanerides1.com). 

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