



Chapter 736 Newsletter for February 2015

8th Annual Aviation Forum

Where aviation interest, organizations and businesses gather to discuss upcoming fly-ins and events for the 2015 flying season. All information will be compiled and published through the MAA website

February 28, 2015 (wx date March 1)

Owls Head Transportation Museum

Knox County-Rockland Airport (RKD)

0930-1000 Registration

1000-1015 Introduction

1015-1230 General Session

1230-1330 (approx.) Lunch

1330-1500 (approx.) Special Presentations

Sponsors: EAA87/MAA/Katahdin Wings/Columbia Air Services

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FAA Amends ADS-B Rule

The FAA on Monday posted a correction to its rule on ADS-B requirements for the general aviation fleet, which should offer more choices to owners of experimental and LSA aircraft. The notice reads that the final rule, posted in May 2010, required that ADS-B equipment must meet the requirements of certain TSOs; however, the FAA says it should have stated that the equipment must "meet the performance requirements" in those TSOs. The change is substantial, since equipment may be available in the experimental market that hasn't gone through the expensive TSO process, but can deliver the same performance at a lower price. The requirements for type-certificated aircraft are unchanged.

EAA said on Monday the change was a "good first step" to finding solutions for experimental aircraft to meet the 2020 ADS-B mandate.

The FAA correction, however, raised some questions because it doesn't specifically state that the change affects only experimental and LSA aircraft.

No user fees in White House budget plan

For the first time in years, President Barack Obama's new budget proposal does not include any new user fees for general aviation. Past budgets from the Obama administration have proposed a \$100-per-flight fee for GA, but that idea has met with strong opposition from AOPA and others, including GA supporters in Congress who have repeatedly written to the White House insisting they would not support such a fee.

The president's past three budget proposals included user fees as did his very first budget request. But the 2016 budget proposal, which was released on Feb. 2, is silent on the matter and includes increased FAA funding in many areas.

The latest budget includes a \$15.8 billion request to fund the FAA and its activities, including the search for an avgas replacement, air traffic management, operations, airport infrastructure, and NextGen modernization. In making the request, the White House notes that the money is an investment in the future of aviation, an industry that accounts for more than 5 percent of the nation's gross domestic product.

As part of that \$15.8 billion funding request, the president's budget proposal seeks \$9.92 billion for the operation and maintenance of the national air traffic control system, a 2-percent increase over the funding level enacted in the 2015 fiscal year.

A larger proposed increase of almost 10 percent would allow the FAA to continue operating the National Airspace System while investing in NextGen modernization. The budget proposes a total of \$2.86 billion for facilities and equipment, including \$845 million for NextGen-related capital investments—a \$53 million increase over enacted 2015 spending levels. The money to be set aside for NextGen includes \$13 million to expand performance-based navigation within metroplex areas, which include the nation's busiest airspace. It also includes \$45 million for the continued implementation for ADS-B while another \$139 million will pay for the needed satellite subscription services.

Research, engineering, and development activities also get a boost in the 2016 budget proposal, with suggested funding of \$166 million, a 5.7-percent increase over the 2015 enacted spending level. Included in that portion of the budget is \$6 million to continue research needed to transition from avgas to an unleaded replacement fuel.

The budget would reduce funding in one critical area—Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants. The president's 2016 budget proposal would set a \$2.9 billion obligation limitation for the program, a decrease of \$450 million from the 2015 spending level. But the money would be focused on smaller commercial and GA airports that don't have access to other revenue sources. At the same time, the budget would nearly double the passenger facility charge at all commercial service airports from \$4.50 to \$8. It also would eliminate guaranteed AIP entitlements at large hub airports, giving them more flexibility to generate alternative funding streams.

EPA denies petition to change avgas decision

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has denied the most recent petition from environmental groups asking the agency to reconsider a 2012 decision not to immediately pursue an endangerment finding for leaded avgas.

In a Jan. 23 letter to the petitioners, the EPA said it takes the issue of lead emissions from aircraft seriously and is continuing to investigate the degree to which those emissions may pose a health threat. Any endangerment finding, the letter said, would be based on data collected during the agency's ongoing investigations.

The letter was a response to the most recent petition from Friends of the Earth, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Oregon Aviation Watch, filed in April 2014. In repeated actions since 2006, the groups have asked the EPA to determine that leaded avgas poses a threat to public health.

In 2012, the EPA said it was not ready to make such a finding and was pursuing additional data to make a scientific determination as to whether lead emissions from aircraft engines pose an endangerment. Friends of the Earth challenged the EPA's decision, but it was upheld in court. At that time, the EPA said it could have a notice of proposed endangerment sometime in 2015.

In its January 2015 denial, the EPA said it will delay the date of the proposed finding of endangerment because of budget issues, the scheduling of other regulatory actions, and the need for additional research. Under the new timetable, the EPA will produce a notice of proposed rulemaking in 2017 with a final determination expected in 2018. That timing coincides with the FAA's goal of having completed testing on one or more alternative aviation fuels by 2018.

The aviation and petroleum industries have been working closely with the FAA to identify one or more **replacements for leaded avgas**. Through the Piston Aviation Fuels Initiative (PAFI), of which AOPA is a leading member, four candidate fuels have been selected for the first phase of testing at the FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center. That initial testing is on track to be completed by late 2015 when one or two of the most promising fuels will move on to full-scale testing in aircraft and engines.

The EPA publicized its decision to deny the Friends of the Earth petition on the aviation page of its website. Also on that page, the EPA provided an updated report on its airport monitoring program. The agency monitored lead levels at 17 airports and found that at 15 of the sites, levels were below the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for lead. The findings were first made available in June 2013, but the report overview provided on the website adds monitoring data through December 2013.

Goodbye NDB and other outdated test questions

The FAA has updated the airman testing portion of its website to highlight improvements to the airman testing and certification process that have emerged from a collaborative effort with the aviation industry, in which AOPA played a leading role.

Instructors, pilots, and students visiting the site can learn about the **draft airman certification standards**,

developed by industry and designed to become the foundation of the FAA's transition to a more integrated and systematic approach to pilot certification.

Also, the training and testing page's section titled "What's new and upcoming in airman testing" contains information about changes to the Private Pilot-Airplane Airman Knowledge Test that are to go into effect Feb. 9, said David Oord, AOPA director of regulatory affairs.

The page contains a briefing on the proposed draft airman certification standard for [private pilot](#), commercial pilot, authorized instructor certificates, and the instrument rating that were developed by the FAA's Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee's Airman Certification System working group, [chaired by AOPA](#).

In addition to the [briefing](#) on the certification standards, answers to [frequently asked questions](#) are available on the page.

The site's section on new and upcoming testing changes is also [reporting](#) on the deletion of questions in several topic areas and of several types from the Private Pilot Airplane Airman Knowledge Test beginning Feb. 9, and the addition of a new set of test-question codes, as explained below.

Questions being deleted covered outdated topics including automatic direction finder/nondirectional beacon (ADF/NDB); radar summary charts; the En Route Flight Advisory Service (EFAS); medevac; and transcribed weather broadcasts (TWEB).

The FAA will also delete from the knowledge test "questions involving scalability (i.e., those questions requiring the use of nonstandard scales for measurement or calculation)," and aircraft performance and weather questions "that involve multiple interpolations across multiple charts."

In another refinement, sample Private Pilot Airplane Airman Knowledge Test questions available on the FAA website will show two types of associated codes: the learning statement code(s) associated with the question topic area, and the new airman certification standards code for the question topic area. Learning statement codes currently appear on a knowledge test-taker's Airman Knowledge Test Report for any missed test questions. The FAA said it expects airman certification standards codes to replace the learning statement codes on the knowledge test within 12 to 18 months. The new coding system will eventually apply to both knowledge test questions and practical test tasks, linking the two tests through the new system.