



Chapter 736 Newsletter for February 2020

FAA CONSIDERS SUPERIOR AIR PARTS CRANKSHAFT ASSEMBLY AD

The FAA has proposed an airworthiness directive (AD) requiring the removal from service of some Superior Air Parts crankshaft assemblies used on all SAP Model IO-360-series and O-360-series reciprocating engines and certain Lycoming engines following three loss-of-power accidents tied to fatigue cracking of the crankshaft assemblies.

The AD, which affects an estimated 115 crankshaft assemblies installed on U.S.-registered normal-category aircraft, includes Lycoming engine models AEIO-360-, IO-360-, and O-360-series engines if they have a Superior Air Parts crankshaft assembly with designated part numbers installed. The crankshaft assemblies were installed as original equipment on the affected Superior Air Parts engines and under parts manufacturer approval on the Lycoming engines, according to a notice published January 29.

The FAA will accept comments from the public on the proposed AD until March 16.

According to the FAA, the estimated cost of a full crankshaft replacement is \$14,821.

After investigating three Superior Air Parts crankshaft assembly failures that caused loss of power and “immediate or emergency landings” on March 6, 2017; August 3, 2017; and October 31, 2018, the FAA “determined that the crankshaft assembly failures resulted from the manufacturing process at [Superior Air Parts’] crankshaft vendor during 2012 and 2014.” Analysis determined that all three failures were the result of fatigue cracking, the FAA notice said.

The proposed AD would permit a one-time special flight permit to fly the aircraft to a maintenance facility to comply with the AD. Limitations would include no passengers, VFR day conditions only, and avoiding areas of known turbulence.

NEXT GENERATION OF ADS-B SHOULD INCLUDE PIREP CAPABILITY

Now that aircraft are required to be equipped with ADS-B for flight in most controlled airspace, AOPA is calling on the FAA to adopt technical standards for new-generation 1090 MHz ADS-B that include the capacity to transmit and receive pilot reports as one of ADS-B’s weather-information-delivery capabilities.

Increasing pIREPs by allowing their submission via electronic means, will greatly expand the amount of weather information available to pilots, air traffic control, and forecasters. AOPA surveys and research conducted by the FAA indicates pilots would submit more PIREPs if they could do so electronically, such as via ADS-B,

The letter noted that attempts to fly by visual references in instrument conditions are a leading cause of fatal general aviation accidents and the leading cause of weather-related accidents. Introducing “downlink of pIREPs via ADS-B” was consistent with past recommendations issued by the National Transportation Safety Board, it said.

UNITED AIRLINES DIGS INTO TRAINING MARKET

United Airlines is taking a more hands-on approach to solving the pilot shortage, announcing a partnership with ATP and the purchase of an Arizona flight school.

ATP Flight School and United Airlines are partnering to provide aspiring airline pilots with training and a direct route to a United flight deck, ATP announced February 5. United and ATP’s Aviate partnership combines ATP’s accelerated fixed-cost pilot training with milestones to advance pilots toward a career with United.

Students in ATP’s Airline Career Pilot Program earn pilot certification in just nine months and can apply to United Aviate early during their training. After graduating, participants in Aviate take advantage of ATP’s guaranteed flight instructor job, allowing them to build flight experience and progress toward United. Once meeting the flight hour requirements, pilots first fly for a United Express carrier. Then, after satisfying Aviate program requirements, they are eligible to transition to United Airlines as a first officer without any additional interviewing required.

United also announced on February 5 that it purchased Westwind School of Aeronautics, a Phoenix-based flight training academy that will provide the air carrier with an immediate influx of future pilots, flight instructors, and a robust flight training curriculum.

The Arizona flight training academy will be folded into the airline’s Aviate program as United seeks to hire more than 10,000 pilots by 2029.

United also hinted that it would soon launch initiatives to help “reduce financial barriers” to those seeking career pilot positions, including a scholarship program “specifically focused on encouraging women and minorities.”

2021 NASA budget request supports X-59 experimental supersonic jet development

Included in the \$25.2 billion budget request for NASA is \$819 million for aeronautics research, up from \$783 million in 2020. One of NASA's chief aeronautics programs is the experimental X-59 supersonic aircraft being built by Lockheed Martin to pioneer quieter sonic booms for commercial travel. NASA's budget documents released to date did not include the exact funding for the new jet, but the project is vital for the agency's aeronautics division.

In addition to funding X-59 QueSST, the budget request also proposes increased funding "for investments in ultra-fast hypersonic flight, hybrid-electric jet engine systems that could power future passenger airliners, and research on the safe integration of remotely-piloted aircraft into U.S. airspace."

In the request, the agency explicitly states that they are proposing funding not only for the plane, but additionally for "Research to make air travel faster and cheaper and safely integrate drones into the nation's airspace," NASA writes in the request. The budget also cites its support of aeronautics research "that contributes to the Nation's technological leadership and supports high-quality jobs."

MAINE AVIATION FORUM

Mike and Jody Watson attended the 13th Annual Maine Aviation Forum on February 15th at Owls Head Transportation Museum. It was a great day with speakers from many aviation-related organizations around the state, including:

EAA chapters

Katahdin Wings 99s

Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF)

Ace Camp <https://www.maineacecamp.org/>

MaineDOT Aviation Systems Plan Update

Maine Aviation Business Association

Maine Aeronautics Association

Seaplane Pilots Association

Penobscot Island Air

Higher Ground Aviation

Fallen American Veterans Foundation

AOPA Eastern Region

Dover-Foxcroft Airport Update

UMA Director of Education & Research UAS/CAP

Maine Powerchutes

I encourage you to bookmark the Maine Aeronautics Association website, as Lisa Reece does a great job updating the website with events around the state. <http://www.maineaeronautics.org/>.

Our EAA 736 Fly-In and Young Eagles Rally will be held on Saturday, July 11, 2020 and will be posted on the MAA site. **SAVE THE DATE!**

