

On Approach

Avemco® Policyholder News

Winter 2018



Combating Icing [P1](#)



Misleading Computer Screens [P3](#)



Add-On Ratings [P6](#)



COMBATING ICING IN GENERAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT

By Sarah Rovner, Master CFI, CFII, MEI, ATP, Owner of FullThrottle Aviation LLC

As winter weather reaches the majority of the United States, it brings a unique set of weather phenomena. The colder temperatures and frozen precipitation pose an exceptional threat to general aviation aircraft. Although general aviation aircraft range in size and capability to handle cold weather conditions, careful thought must go into planning when the threat of icing is present. As an international ferry pilot who has flown 115 different aircraft in 15 different countries and taken small aircraft across the North Atlantic to Europe, there are many tools and strategies that I have come to use that many general aviation pilots may benefit from.

Icing poses risks to aircraft beyond the loss of control situations that pilots have read about in accident reports. Even small amounts of ice accumulation will degrade aircraft performance significantly. I've picked up small amounts of ice climbing through thin clouds, and even a minuscule amount of ice can equate to significant losses of airspeed which eats into fuel reserves. For North Atlantic crossings in most small aircraft, the longest legs are just shy of 700nm between Canada and Greenland, and then Greenland to Iceland. Most of the airplanes I've flown across have a range of just slightly more than that with reserves. Therefore, it's absolutely critical that there is no ice accumulation or there is the risk of running out of fuel before reaching shore.

Not all ice will sublimate. When ferrying a King Air across the North Atlantic, I picked up ice while climbing through clouds on the way to Iceland from Greenland. After waiting for the proper amount of ice accumulation, I engaged the de-ice boots but not all ice came off, nor did it come off completely evenly. Just that small accumulation caused a decrease in performance, but luckily the tailwind allowed the flight to continue with

sufficient reserves. The ice didn't come off for the entire 4-hour leg, with temperatures around -40°C (-40°F) at 25,000ft. The dangers of icing and its effect on performance are serious, and pilots should not anticipate that the ice they pick up on the climb will go away once they are clear of clouds.

Although not all clouds will cause icing in winter, there is a high probability that a general aviation aircraft will begin to accumulate ice when the temperature drops to around 0°C (32°F) and there is visible moisture present. FAA Advisory Circular 91-74B¹ discusses how clouds and visible moisture at temperatures below freezing are often mixed with frozen liquids (super cooled clouds) and ice particles. Ice accumulation is often greatest at temperatures just below freezing where there is a high quantity of liquid water content, and nearly negligible when the temperature is below about -20°C (-4°F) as most clouds are made up entirely of ice particles. As the temperatures start to get colder, it is critical that pilots ensure they are staying within the operating limitations of their aircraft. Not all piston airplanes can handle the extreme cold, so pilots must consult their aircraft manufacturer for temperature limitations to include pre-heat and engine temperature limitations. Additionally, many general aviation airplanes equipped with TKS systems also have temperature limitations and a specific operating envelope where protection is effective.

Ferrying small aircraft for long distances has little to do with flying itself - it's all about planning. A great tool that many general aviation pilots are not aware of is the GRAMET, which is a graphical vertical flight path weather forecast based on the Global Forecast System. This tool combines prognostic charts, AIRMETS, SIGMETS, winds aloft tables, and many other tools into a graphical representation of weather along a specific flight path and altitude at a specific time. In many cases, pilots are not able to attain a temperature range suitable for operation in clouds due to altitude limitations, so the GRAMET is helpful to get an idea of where the clouds actually are in relation to their path in order to choose a path that would keep them clear of visible moisture in a dangerous temperature range. The Autorouter is a free tool that can generate a GRAMET for pilots by inputting their route and flight plan information, and can be found at: <https://www.autorouter.aero>.^{*} Although the Autorouter is primarily for European pilots that look for route and flight planning tools, the tool does work for any ICAO airport. By selecting the GRAMET link on the upper right hand side (which does not require an account), a user can input their flight plan information, time and altitude and it will generate a GRAMET

immediately. Since the tool is more geared toward Europe, not all North American fixes will be recognized but most airports should be. OGIMET is another tool that can be used to generate a GRAMET and it can be found at www.ogimet.com.^{*} OGIMET is not as easy to use but it does provide the same data and even has an Android App (but not for iPhone).

Icing poses a severe threat to aircraft and can significantly degrade performance and aircraft control. Avoiding icing conditions with a high probability of ice accumulation is important for the safe completion of any General Aviation flight. Proper pre-flight planning using all available information and tools is a very important part of icing avoidance. While enjoying the cooler temperatures this winter, make sure you are taking into account all aspects of winter weather while planning your flights. Fly safe this winter and remember that cold weather isn't to be avoided completely; but it is to be respected.

Sarah Rovner holds an ATP certificate with a CL-65 type rating and is currently a FAA Safety Team Lead Representative, Master Instructor, Captain and FTD instructor/evaluator with a Part 121 airline. Since changing careers after years as a senior network engineer for the oil & gas industry, Sarah has obtained her ATP, CFI, CFII, MEI and has flown over 3800 hours. As the owner of an international ferry pilot company, FullThrottle Aviation LLC, Sarah has flown over 115 different types of general aviation airplanes in 15 different countries, including oceanic crossings in small aircraft. She continues to stay involved in general aviation through mentoring and education; volunteering at many different events and presenting original seminars on aviation safety and human factors. Although much of her flying is now professional in nature, she still enjoys flying a Super Cub on her days off. As a regular attendee of EAA AirVenture and local fly-ins, she enjoys the company and camaraderie that general aviation brings.

¹ https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/AC_91-74B.pdf

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MISLEADING COMPUTER SCREENS IN THE COCKPIT

By Max Trescott, CFI, Glass Cockpit Specialist, Platinum CSIP, 2008 National CFI of the Year, Aviation News Talk podcast host at www.aviationnewstalk.com.



In 2003, General Aviation changed when Cirrus Aircraft introduced glass cockpits into their SR20 and SR22 aircraft. It changed again with the introduction of the iPad, which made it easier to see applications that previously ran on smartphones and laptops. About the same time, portable ADS-B receivers brought low-cost traffic displays into the cockpit. But all of these technologies are a double-edged sword: they provide more information, but users who don't understand their limitations often misinterpret the data displayed. For example, portable ADS-B receivers sometimes won't display the most relevant traffic!

There is a reason the FAA requires aircraft manufacturers to include a complete list of limitations for aircraft in section 2 of the Pilot Operating Handbook (POH) or Aircraft Flight Manual (AFM). Aircraft have limits, and if we exceed them, bad things can happen! Likewise,

avionics and computers are only as good as the data they have to work with. Simply because you see—or don't see—something on a screen doesn't mean it's an accurate representation of the real world. Even software engineers, who know the “garbage in, garbage out” limitations

of computers, can get lulled into a false sense of security when they're looking at a screen in the cockpit. Here are some examples of how you could get misled by computer screens in the cockpit.

XM AND ADS-B RADAR DATA

If you use in-cockpit weather, either from a SiriusXM subscription or ADS-B, you hopefully know that the green, yellow, orange, and red colors you see show you where the rain was, and not where it is now. That's one reason pilots are told to fly at least 20 miles around storms. Another reason is that hail from a storm can be pushed by the Jetstream as much as 20 miles away from the storm! Hence, I think it's a poor idea to use these systems to try to fly through what look like small holes in a storm.

Most of these systems give misleading information about the age of the radar data displayed. For example, they may display the weather “age” in number of minutes. However, the number of minutes shown is *how long it’s been since the radar information was received in your airplane*, not how old the data is! The data is actually more than seven or eight minutes old before it is transmitted to your airplane! Therefore, if your display says the radar data is two minutes old, you should be thinking that it’s at least 10 minutes old. When you consider that a fast-moving frontline can easily move at 30 or 40 miles an hour, it’s easy to see how 10-minute-old weather can be very misleading!

FUEL RANGE RING

The fuel range ring you see displayed in a Garmin G1000 or Cirrus Perspective glass cockpit can be very handy for adjusting power settings and fuel flow, so that you can sometimes skip a fuel stop and still arrive at your destination with your reserve fuel intact. This feature *relies upon the pilot* accurately entering the number of gallons of fuel on board into the system when the aircraft is first started. If the wrong number is entered, the fuel range ring displayed is useless.

To calculate the fuel range ring, the system also uses current ground speed and fuel flow rate. So while the fuel range ring might initially show your destination is achievable, if the winds later change, you might no longer be able to reach it. Likewise, changes in power setting and fuel flow will also adjust the size of the ring.

TO UNDERSTAND WHY PORTABLE ADS-B RECEIVERS GIVE A GROSSLY MISLEADING PICTURE OF TRAFFIC AROUND YOU, IT’S IMPORTANT TO STEP BACK AND DESCRIBE PANEL-MOUNTED ADS-B SOLUTIONS.

But even technically savvy people can be tripped up if they are unaware of how the fuel range ring is generated. At a flying club where I teach, a member flew a Cessna 172/G1000 on a long cross-country trip. As he approached Livermore, California, about 20 miles from his destination, he decided that he was running low on fuel and should stop to refuel. As he pulled the throttle back to descend, the fuel range ring got larger. Later when he looked at it, he concluded that he now had enough fuel to make it to his destination, and he skipped the fuel stop.

After he landed and the aircraft was refueled, it was determined that only two or three gallons of fuel remained. Upon reflection of having flown past the point of having the FAR-required VFR fuel reserve at the destination, the pilot admitted he did not stop for fuel because the computer showed he would make it to the destination airport. Sole reliance on computer data could have led to an accident.

PORTABLE ADS-B RECEIVER LIMITATIONS

I recently talked about the limitations of portable ADS-B receivers on my Aviation News Talk podcast. My motivation came from a flight the prior day with a pilot who brought along a portable ADS-B receiver, but who was totally unaware that these devices often won’t display the most relevant traffic. I was initially surprised, as he was a smart guy and I thought anyone spending many hundreds of dollars on avionics would have read the manual. But later I realized that many of us have skipped reading a manual once we figure out the basics.

To understand why portable ADS-B receivers give a grossly misleading picture of traffic around you, it’s important to step back and describe panel-mounted ADS-B solutions. There are two ADS-B capabilities: “ADS-B Out” and “ADS-B In.” ADS-B Out is the only function mandated by new rules, and it refers to an aircraft broadcasting its position and other information. Owners can

THERE MAY BE LOTS OF AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATELY IN FRONT OF YOU, BUT YOUR PORTABLE ADS-B RECEIVER WON'T DISPLAY THEM, SINCE THEY ARE NOT A THREAT TO THE ADS-B OUT EQUIPPED AIRCRAFT THAT'S NOW 15 MILES BEHIND YOU.

at their option, also equip with ADS-B In, which allows an aircraft to receive traffic information from ADS-B Out equipped aircraft, surface vehicles, and FAA ground stations. In the FAA's original deployment of ADS-B in Alaska in 2003, the ADS-B ground stations broadcast in unlimited mode, meaning that all traffic data was continuously broadcasted to all aircraft. However, the ADS-B ground stations in the lower 48 states broadcast a "custom payload," meaning they only broadcast traffic threats applicable to airplanes equipped with an ADS-B Out transmitter; other traffic threats to non-ADS-B Out equipped aircraft are NOT broadcast. So if you're flying with

a portable ADS-B receiver and the aircraft you're in is not equipped with ADS-B Out, traffic threats affecting your aircraft are not broadcast.

Portable ADS-B receivers do receive some traffic information. You will receive direct, air-to-air transmissions from ADS-B Out equipped aircraft that are flying nearby. But if you are not within line-of-sight of one of the 800 ADS-B ground stations, that is ALL you will see.

However, if you are within line-of-sight of an ADS-B ground station, you will also see traffic data being transmitted to ADS-B Out equipped aircraft. In particular, for each ADS-B Out aircraft, the FAA transmits all traffic within a 15-mile radius and +/-3500 feet of that aircraft. Imagine a hockey puck of that size centered on each ADS-B equipped aircraft; you'll see the data for each of those nearby hockey pucks.

So if you happen to be flying close to an ADS-B Out equipped aircraft, your portable ADS-B receiver is essentially a parasite that's living off the data sent to that aircraft. Imagine however, that you're flying away from that aircraft. When you're 15 miles away from it, you may feel comfortable because all of the traffic displayed is behind you, and no targets are displayed in front of you. However, that's because you've reached the limit of the ADS-B Out equipped aircraft's hockey puck! There may be lots of aircraft immediately in front of you, but your portable ADS-B receiver won't display them, since they are not a threat to the ADS-B Out equipped aircraft that's now 15 miles behind you.

Portable ADS-B receivers are most effective when flying near airports with airline service, since most airliners are already equipped with

ADS-B Out. However, in rural areas with no airliners and few ADS-B OUT equipped aircraft flying in the area, a portable ADS-B receiver may rarely display any of the traffic around you.

The bottom line is that the new technology found in modern GA cockpits brings lots of additional information that can enhance safety when it's properly interpreted. But it's critical that you understand the limitations for each of those pieces of technology. If you lack knowledge of the limitations of the equipment and the data presented, then you may be grossly misled by what you see on those screens.

Max Trescott, author and 2008 National CFI of the Year specializes in teaching in glass cockpit aircraft. He is best known for his Max Trescott's G1000 Glass Cockpit Handbook. He hosts the www.AviationNewsTalk.com podcast, which focuses on General Aviation and safety and is a former magazine columnist for EAA Sport Aviation. He also authored a series of safety tips for FAAST, the FAA Safety Team. Max is a San Francisco area-based CFI, Gold Seal Flight Instructor Certificate, and Cirrus Platinum CSIP instructor who specializes in teaching in and publishing training materials for glass cockpit aircraft. In addition to being an FAA FAASTeam Representative, he gives teaches and gives safety presentations across the country. Read more of his work at www.maxtrescott.com.



ADD-ON RATINGS – PUT YOUR “LICENSE TO LEARN” TO GOOD USE

By Michael Adams, Senior Vice President, Avemco Insurance Company

There’s a reason why the Private Pilot Certificate is often called “a license to learn.” It should be the beginning of your education as a pilot, not the end. In reality, every flight you make can provide opportunities to learn if you have the right attitude. But one of the best ways to become a better and safer pilot is by earning add-on ratings, even if you never put that rating to use once it’s in your pocket.

Plus they’re challenging, fun and answer the question of what to do with that private ticket now that you’ve got it.

For example, a glider rating can usually be accomplished in a couple of weekends and, even if you never plan on flying without an engine again, it can do wonders for your stick and rudder skills along with understanding lift and where to find it. For that matter, a glider rating can help you prepare for flying without an engine when you least expect it. There are some well-known instances of airline pilots who attribute their successful dead-stick landings in part to their experience as a glider pilot. The glider-pilot captain of the Boeing 767 that suddenly became the famous “Gimli Glider” after it ran out of fuel comes to mind. Google it. It’s a fascinating story.

Then there’s the seaplane rating. Again, an educational and fun add-on to your private pilot certificate. Even if you will never own a floatplane, you’ll learn a lot that will make you a better pilot in your single-engine land airplane. You’ll become much more sensitive to wind direction and strength by watching the waves on a lake. And seaplane pilots also rely heavily on their stick and rudder skills, both of which will make you sharper in any airplane.

In my opinion, one of the most highly respected learning experiences of any add-on rating is the tail wheel endorsement. It’s also the one that will give you a lot of bragging rights. If you’ve ever met a taildragger pilot, you may have heard them whisper under their breath that real pilots don’t need that extra wheel. Learning to taxi, takeoff, land and taxi again in a tail dragger gives new meaning to the maxim “The flight isn’t over until the plane is back in the hangar.”

I haven’t forgotten ratings like commercial and the most frequently acquired of all add-on ratings: the instrument rating. But those are far more time-consuming, intense and expensive tickets to earn. On the other hand, there is no add-on-rating that will teach you more or be as useful as the instrument rating, even if you never fly in the clouds. You’ll learn precision in holding airspeed and altitude. You’ll learn to plan ahead and for the unforeseen. You’ll learn how to make a stabilized approach. You’ll learn to improve your radio skills. You’ll even learn how to stay alive on that day you encounter weather you didn’t think you’d ever fly in. Even if you are unable to complete your instrument training, what you do complete will make you

a better pilot. You will really understand and appreciate that saying of “I’d rather be on the ground wishing I were in the air, rather than in the air wishing I were on the ground”. Time spent with a good CFII will give you skills that will serve you well on any future flight.

The same goes for working toward the commercial rating. Many of the commercial maneuvers are designed to increase safety and precision. And the practical test standards are tighter. For example, the commercial standards require that you hold your altitude within 50 feet vs. 100 feet for the private check ride.

Ratings such as the multi-engine and various type ratings are another topic for another time. Can they make a single-engine private pilot better? Of course. Any training can. But you will spend most of your time on your way to a multi-engine rating learning what to do if you find yourself flying on one engine. And although a type-rating will certainly raise your game, the skills you learn will deteriorate quickly if you don’t use them in that type in the near future.

Finally there is a small financial benefit to adding a rating or endorsement. If you are insured with Avemco, all of the training and activities outlined here qualify for the Avemco Safety Rewards Program which may earn you up to a 10% premium credit*. Will it pay the cost of getting the rating or endorsement? No, but will it help? Yes. We provide a 10% credit because our experience tells us that pilots that train on an annual basis and continue to earn additional ratings and endorsements are less likely to have an accident than those that don’t.

The one thing I haven’t spent much time discussing is perhaps the main reason for getting any rating: It’s fun. The reason you became a pilot in the first place was because you loved the idea of flying. New ratings teach you new ways to love it.

Mike Adams, Senior Vice President of Underwriting, is an instrument-rated pilot, and a former President of the Oregon Pilots Association. Mike holds a property/casualty insurance license in all 50 states. His more than 34 years of combined experience with general aviation and the aviation insurance industry helps pilots to understand why many of Avemco’s coverages and underwriting decisions are designed to help keep them safe.

**Premium credits subject to underwriting guidelines. The information described herein does not amend, or otherwise affect, the terms and conditions of any insurance policy issued by Avemco. In the event that a policy is inconsistent with the information described herein, the language of the policy will take precedence.*

TRANSITIONS



Many of our customers received friendly renewal reminders over the years from the lovely voice of Helen Davis, Aviation Service Underwriter at Avemco Insurance Company. Helen retired this past December after 26 years of dedicated service to Avemco. We will miss her

cheerful personality, as we heard her chatting to customers and friends about our insurance.

While our team and customers will miss Helen, from the sounds of it she will be busy. “I am looking forward to spending time with my two sisters and granddaughters”, Helen related. She also anticipates joining a women’s golfing league at a nearby course and helping to take care of her friend’s donkey “Taco”. And as Helen assured us, “of course I will be calling my Avemco family to schedule lunch dates.”



Readback is your chance to tell us what you think about everything we have to say and do – including our PIREPs, articles, emails and previous issues of the *On Approach* newsletter. Content has been or may be edited for length and style before publication.

RESPONSES TO JASON BLAIR'S ["ALL THOSE OLDER PLANES"](#)

Thanks for great article. I bought 1/2 ownership in Cherokee 235 1965 vintage that had less than 200 hours on new engine. Installed GTN 650, moved instruments to standard 6 pack, put lights on instruments, and added Pitot heat and have a hauling machine now. Only has 3500 hours on airframe. My cost before avionics 25k. Vref lists it at 70k. Always hangared.

--Darrell Lyvers

As an A&P mechanic and the owner of a nearly 60 year old Cessna 182, I read your latest newsletter with some interest. While I don't disagree with any of the points of the newsletter, I feel compelled to add my two cents.

The availability of parts can depend as much on the aircraft's popularity as age.

I might add that corrosion can belie the calendar age of any aircraft. Extensive corrosion can add decades to the age of any aircraft and cannot be reversed completely. Flintstone's avionics and instruments can be replaced but a badly corroded wing spar is little more than junk. Other things being equal, I will take a 50 year old aircraft with minimal corrosion over a 15 year old with substantial corrosion.

Lastly, the designation "old" is somewhat subjective. Yes, I think everyone can agree that an aircraft that was built in 1940 is old. Yet as a pilot who learned to fly in the early '70s, an aircraft that was built in the late '80s seems relatively new to me while a pilot who learned to fly in a composite aircraft equipped with a glass panel might consider anything that was built in the '90s as "old".

The bottom line is that the calendar age of an aircraft is an important, but not the only factor, in determining the value of an aircraft for a potential owner.

--Randall Boan

RESPONSES TO MIKE ADAMS' ["THE HEAT IS ON"](#)

Mike's article "The Heat is on" was great. A follow up article on Carb Icing might be appropriate.

Attached are some guides I use when flying my Champ in eastern NC where the heat and humidity are perfect for making ice.

--Joe Jones, N157EC

Editor's Note: Here is the link to the attachment sent by this reader: [Carb Ice¹](#)

This is the first Avemco Pirep I've read, and I love the reminder and discussion! I'll be reading these and forwarding them to my students for now on!

--Mark A. Stanfield, BFA, Pharm.D., CFI, AGI

Fantastic refresher on density altitude, but the humidity issue was extremely good information. I fly a Super Cub into and out of some very tight spots, and humidity changes a lot in this part of Alaska!

--Ken Domke

The short read "The Heat is On" was timely and very informative. Yes, always pay close attention to density altitude as I learned a spooky lesson back in the 1980's when I was a new solo pilot.

This was a joy to read and flashed in some very useful facts. I didn't realize just how much hotter the runway asphalt is to the OAT indication.

--Dave Milam

Very well said! As a Florida native, we sometimes take for granted that if you don't like the weather wait 5 minutes. That being said humidity needs to be taken into account just as heat does. It really does affect performance. I know I'm looking into my books before the next flight!

--Steve J

Great review of Hot weather flying and the effects of humidity and "non standard" temperature. And a great tip on using the FAT

gauge for Runway environments and tarmacs which are always radiantly heated.

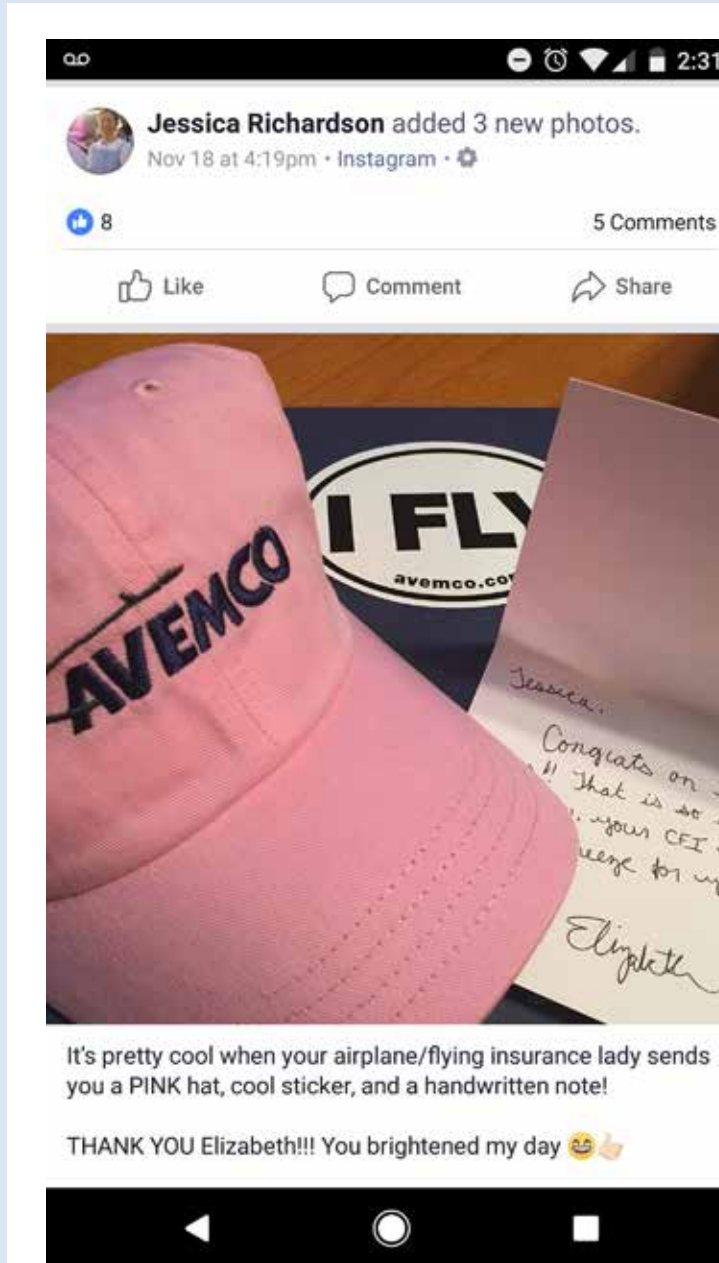
Also would like to note that Density Altitude (reported on AWOS) is the best indication of “non-standard” conditions affecting performance. If the density altitude is 3000 feet or great it may be time to slightly LEAN the mixture for best RPM prior to departure for piston engine singles.

...very easy to overspeed the gas producer (N1 on turbine engines) in “Hot and High” ambient conditions, especially at Max takeoff weight.

--Rick Ellenberger, Senior Army Aviator and FAA Commercial Pilot, Airplane and Rotorcraft

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2013/july/15/training-tip-charting-the-carb-ice-risk>

We welcome your comments and feedback. Your “readback” may be considered for inclusion in our next newsletter and we will contact you prior to obtain permission. Content may be edited for length and style before publication. Email us at avemcomarketing@avemco.com



Here at Avemco Insurance Company, it is all about our connection to our passionate flying community. Recently, our Aviation Service Underwriter, Elizabeth Hoover, got to know one of those passionate pilots at a Women in Aviation International Conference. Jessica Richardson belongs to a flying club that Avemco insures. A short while later, Jessica notified Elizabeth that she was scheduled to take her checkride for her commercial rating. *And Jessica has a thing about pink.* She often flies in a pink shirt, with a pink pen, pink iPad cover and pink phone case. The only pink item Jessica was missing was a pink Avemco pilot cap. Not any longer. Elizabeth sent Jessica this cap to congratulate her on passing the commercial checkride!

COMING TO A HANGAR NEAR YOU!

The most fun we have all year is meeting our customers in person and strengthening our ties within the aviation community.

Avemco currently is a sponsor of the Bonanza & Baron Pilot Training clinics. For a list of upcoming clinics [click here*](#). The courses are custom designed for pilots and owners of Bonanzas, Barons, Travel Airs, Twin Bonanzas and Dukes.

Avemco will be exhibiting at the following aviation tradeshow in 2018:

FEBRUARY 24-25

Northwest Aviation
Conference & Trade
Show
Puyallup Fair &
Events Center -
Showplex, Blue Gate
110 9th Ave. SW
Puyallup WA 98371
Booth # 812

APRIL 10-15

Sun 'n Fun
4175 Medulla Road
Lakeland FL 33811
Booth # C-056

MAY 5-6

Great Alaska
Aviation Gathering
6050 Rockwell Ave.
Anchorage AK
99502
Booth # 54

JUNE 15-16

AOPA Fly In #1
Missoula (KMSO) MT
Booth # 10

JULY 23-29

EAA AirVenture
Oshkosh WI
Booth # 1159/1160

SEPTEMBER 14-15

AOPA Fly In #2
Santa Fe (KSAF) NM
Booth # 63

OCTOBER 5-6

AOPA Fly In #3
Carbondale (KMDH)
IL
Booth # 59

OCTOBER 26-27

AOPA Fly In #4
Gulf Shores (KJKA)
AL
Booth # 61

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Avemco Insurance Company
8490 Progress Drive, Suite 100
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Customer Feedback and
Aviation Insurance Questions:
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avemco@avemco.com

Online: avemco.com

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Publisher

Avemco Insurance Company

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