

Communication Summary

December 03, 2020

Communication From: Brad Miller, Cirrus



Mr. Miller was advised that the COPA forum excerpt contains a recommendation from a forum member for covering the static ports with a removable suction cup device. He was asked if Cirrus could advise if this could be a real-world safety device in reference to prevent water intrusion into the static system? If so, can you advise what is a good way to disseminate that COPA member safety recommendation to non-COPA owner/operators too? The handbook indicates to drain the system if water intrusion is known or suspected. However, it's not in its preflight checklist. Can you advise what Cirrus thinks about adding draining the static system either as a step or warning note to the checklist too as pilots frequent the checklist more than the narratives?

Mr. Miller, in part, replied that testing would have to be done to ensure that sudden removal of the suction cup would not damage the avionics due to a sharp pressure change. Without proper testing Cirrus would not endorse this. He however replied that a good quality aircraft cover would protect the static port from the elements and would be virtually impossible to forget during pre-flight.

In reference to dissemination of information, Mr. Miller indicated that the NTSB's new report format allows for lessons learned content. Recommend that the content of this report point out AC 20-35C. This would spawn discussion on the COPA forums that will be educational to their member base at a time when readership is at a proven heightened state. An NTSB recommendation to the FAA to update AC 20-35C would also update the guidance given based on this accident and others, and could include vetted suggestions for all aviators to prevent water intrusion to the pitot-static system on their plane.

He advised that Cirrus has recently added a "Flight Fix" video, titled: Instrument Cockpit Check, that is free to the public on our website. This video does a good job of going through a proper pre-flight checks of instruments prior to takeoff. It can be found here: <https://www.cirrusapproach.com/flight-fix/>

In reference to pilots draining water from the static system as part of the pre-flight, he advised that like many, if not most small GA aircraft, access to the pitot-static system is a maintenance function and not available to the pilot. The system is inspected at 100 hour and/or annual inspection and additionally on-condition if the pilot knows or suspects system contamination.

I can attest that the above summary is correct to the best of my knowledge:

Edward F. Malinowski
National Transportation Safety Board
Air Safety Investigator