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First GE-powered King Air Earns 135 Air Charter Certification



Robert Bell

MANITOWOC, WIS. – The first King Air powered by GE's new H80 turboprop engines has entered FAA 135 Air Charter service. The King Air C90, operated by Lakeshore Aviation in Manitowoc, Wis., is the first to be certified with a recently-approved STC using the new 800-shp engines built by GE Aviation in their new manufacturing facilities in Prague, Czech Republic.

Lakeshore Aviation president, Curt Drumm, complimented the cooperative effort between his staff, the Milwaukee FAA Flight Standards District Office, GE Aviation, and Smyrna Air Center, which completed the installation work and holds the STC. The plane has run flawlessly since we took delivery, according to Drumm.

The 800-shp H80 turboprop engines combine the elegant, robust design of the M601 engine with GE's 3-D aerodynamic design techniques and advanced materials to create a more powerful, fuel-efficient, durable engine with no recurrent fuel nozzle inspections and no hot section inspections. The H80 engine will feature an extended service life of 3,600 flight-hours or 6,600 cycles between overhauls. It will provide the option of a single- or dual-acting governor, allowing customers to have flexibility in propeller selection.

Greg Ryan, GE Aviation Sales Director, noted that GE has parts in the U.S. and Canada at more than 10 locations and a full network to support its customers worldwide.

The King Air's performance is greatly improved with the new engines. Cruise speeds are increased to over 260 KTAS and climb performance is "phenomenal," in Drumm's words. "We can hold well over a 1000 FPM climb rate up to the mid 20s, which reduces our block time and saves fuel. I can get my passengers to their destination quicker and save money on fuel at the same time." Drumm also noted that the Avia five-bladed props also reduced the interior cabin noise level, adding to passenger comfort.

Smyrna Air Center, located in the Nashville, Tennessee

area, did the work in its 100,000 square foot maintenance facility. In addition to the engine upgrade, the aircraft underwent a complete battery of inspections and airworthiness directive compliance. All life and time limited inspections were complied with, and any necessary repairs were made.

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Lakeshore Aviation's GE-powered King Air at AOPA headquarters in Frederick, Md.

Lakeshore Aviation Photos

In addition to the new GE engines, the King Air also received a complete new glass cockpit centered on dual Garmin G600 flight displays, which integrate with Garmin's new GTN-750 GPS navigator and a GNS-530. The aircraft also features Garmin's new GWX-70 digital radar, XM weather, a Strikefinder and ADS-B weather. Ryan TCAD, TIS and ADS-B provide complete traffic awareness for the flight crew. All operations are coupled to an S-Tec 65 autopilot allowing complete altitude preselect, rate of climb and approach coupling.

Passengers are also in for a treat, with a new luxurious dark leather interior, stunning rosewood cabinetry and trim, and new carpet and headliners. A stylish new paint job rounds out the appearance.

For more information on the GE engine conversion, contact Smyrna Air Center at www.smyrnaaircenter.com, or



GE Aviation at www.geaviation.com/bga/engines/h80.html

For information on Lakeshore Aviation see www.lakeshoreaviation.com/kingair .

