

ECLIPSE 500 JET

standpoint... going way, way, way beyond that!

“Without going through the whole triple 7 program, we are doing several things: First, we constructed the ‘hall lab’ - the highly accelerated live testing lab. We have every single component in the aircraft in that lab running 24/7 under computer control, and temperatures are cycling from minus C to 55 C, and parts of the actuators - particularly the actuators on the flight controls and gear - are cycling between minus 60 C up to plus 55 C. That’s running 24/7 already and that in turn gives us 7,000 to 10,000 hours worth of experience on those components before the first airplane goes into service.

“Second, we are building a significantly greater number of aircraft to test. Most GA test programs are normally made up of two, sometimes three aircraft. Cessna most recently added a third Mustang to their test program. We have five (5) aircraft. Two of those aircraft are what we call Beta aircraft, and the intent of those aircraft is just to fly the pants off of them. We expect to get 1,500 hours on those aircraft prior to the first customer aircraft being delivered. And if you look at the history of other new aircraft coming into service in the GA world - the PC12, CJ, Premier, etc. - it typically takes between 2-4 years for that type of aircraft to see the first aircraft in the fleet get a total of 1,000 hours on it. So as a result, what you really end up doing is having your customers doing the reliability testing. We are not going to do that to our customers.

“We’re doing it all ourselves, and that means when we introduce the aircraft into service, we expect to see a very, very mature product. Then you combine that with the design criteria we have used from the beginning, for example we expect companies like DayJet™ Corporation to use our aircraft at utilization rates which are far beyond what you normally see for GA aircraft.

“Unfortunately for folks at NetJets and FlexJets, they are finding that with the utilization rates they are using today, (that this is) causing tremendously high maintenance costs. Well, we’ve done things like brushless DC motors, no hydraulics, all LED lighting, all electronic circuit breakers - things that don’t break and have typically a minimum of a 50,000-hour MTBF before we have them installed on the aircraft.

So between design, product selection, extensive testing and real-world testing, we think we will be introducing a very, very reliable, mature product into service.”

Vern Raburn recently flew the Eclipse himself and gives his personal pilot report:

“The Eclipse 500 is easy to fly, control surfaces are very much harmonized, and it flies more like a piston aircraft, than a turbine aircraft,” said Raburn. “When you bring the thrust levers up, you get response right now! Conversely, when you pull the levers back, the aircraft slows down. We attribute this to an excel-

lent thrust-to-weight ratio combined with a very low amount of inertia. So I don’t think the concept of getting behind the power curve, and not being able to accelerate out, will apply to this airplane. This airplane will also be easy to land.” □

New Names For Bonanza & Baron

WICHITA, KAN. - Raytheon Aircraft Company has renamed the legendary Beechcraft Bonanza and Beechcraft Baron. The name changes coincide with the newly upgraded avionics systems for the aircraft announced at Oshkosh in August, 2004. Formerly named the Beechcraft Bonanza A36, and the Beechcraft Baron 58, the aircraft will now be formally designated the Beechcraft Bonanza G36 and Beechcraft Baron G58, respectively, with a corresponding change to each model’s type data sheet. Both aircraft feature Garmin G1000 integrated avionics systems as standard equipment and will also feature new paint schemes and logo designs. □

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