

FLYING

FAA Simplifies AOA Indicator Approvals

New policy aimed at improving safety while cutting costs.

By [STEPHEN POPE](#) Posted FEBRUARY 6, 2014

Pilots have been grumbling about a variety of new FAA policies of late, but not this one. The agency yesterday introduced guidance for makers and installers of angle of attack (AOA) indicators aimed at streamlining the approval process and in turn making it simpler and less expensive to add the safety devices to small airplanes.

Under the new policy, manufacturers will be allowed to build AOA indicator systems to ATSM standards without having to go through the full STC and TSO certification processes.

The change, the FAA said, is all about improving aviation safety.



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"Although [AOA indicators] have been available for some time, the effort and cost associated with gaining installation approval has limited their use in general aviation," the FAA said in a statement. "The streamlined requirements are expected to lead to greater use of the devices and increased safety in general aviation."

The new policy could serve as "a prototype for production approval and installation of other add-on aircraft systems in the future," the FAA says. The agency is currently rewriting Part 23 aircraft certification regulations to help cut costs, spur innovation and improve safety.

Several companies have jumped into the AOA market for GA airplanes, including [Alpha Systems](#), [Honeywell's BendixKing](#) and Safe Flight Instrument Corp. The FAA said its Chicago Aircraft Certification Office will process all AOA indicator applications to ensure consistent interpretation of the new policy.

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