



AoA in Focus around AirVenture 2013

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*Angle of attack indicators could soon make their way to the owner-flown segment. Shown here, an AoA indicator in a Cessna 177 Cardinal.
(Photo: [Alpha Systems](#))*

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EAA AirVenture 2013 is barely 48 hours old, but already some definite themes are emerging around the show. Among them is greater discussion regarding use of angle of attack (AoA) indicators in general aviation (GA) aircraft.

Such devices—commonly found in corporate, military, and commercial aircraft—have been discussed for years, but the issue received a boost earlier this month when the FAA General

Aviation Joint Steering Committee issued a [Safety Bulletin](#) encouraging use of AoA indicators in smaller training and owner-flown aircraft.

“Angle of attack is a better parameter to use in avoiding a stall [than published stall speeds] because for any given configuration, the airplane will always stall at the same angle of attack,” reads the bulletin. “This stall angle of attack does not change with weight, temperature or density altitude.”

Shortly after that bulletin came out, Icon Aircraft noted that an easily understood AoA indicator would come standard in its [upcoming A5 amphibious LSA](#), which will also incorporate a number of spin-resistant airframe elements.

“Angle of attack is likely the single most important parameter that helps a pilot fly safely at all times, and yet this information is not commonly found in small airplanes,” noted company CEO Kirk Hawkins.

Further emphasizing the growing importance of AoA information was the announcement Monday that Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU, Booth 49-

61) has installed AoA indicators from [Alpha Systems](#) (Booth 3124 and 3125) throughout its fleet of 61 Cessna aircraft at its Daytona Beach, Fla., and Prescott, Ariz. campuses.

“This low-cost improvement offers considerable educational value for our students and faculty [by letting] pilots know at a glance how much lift is available regardless of an airplane’s speed and altitude,” noted Dr. Jackie Luedtke, director of the Robertson Safety Institute at the Prescott (AZ) ERAU campus and associate professor of safety science.

Various OEMs are considering offering AoA indicators in their GA aircraft, as well.