

Australian Air-Ferry

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March 2008 NEWSLETTER

Fast and Furious

There's a distinct turbine like whine when we apply power for take-off in the new Mooney Acclaim, as the twin turbines wind up you find yourself hurtling down the runway towards rotation speed, and everything's happening reasonably quickly.

The Mooney Acclaim would be best likened to a Ferrari, it's a muscle car, with class. There's an unmistakable throaty note to the engine and once you've lined up and applied power there's no denying, it really does perform. Performance is provided by a twin-turbo (Continental (Teledyne)) Platinum engine, capable of 280hp.



Mooney Acclaim fuels in California for Pacific Crossing.



Capitol Aviation Finance www.capitol.com.au +61 2 9555 8234

Australian Air Ferry was asked to bring the first Mooney Acclaim into Australia, and yes we were a little excited. This aircraft is the fastest single engine (piston engine) aircraft in the world. It'll climb to 25,000ft and cruise at 240 knots, so let's try it out.

After leaving the Qantas flight in LA, boarding a Southwest flight to Austin Texas, and then driving for two hours we found ourselves in Kerrville, the home of Mooney manufacturing. It's winter time in North America and even in southern Texas, we've got a heavy coat on and it's drizzling rain.

Our first day with Mooney was spent meeting management and catching up on some sleep; you don't want to go flying a brand new aircraft of this caliber when you're half asleep.

So after a good night's sleep we checked the weather and headed for the Texas border, where the overcast conditions were forecast to cease.



Mooney Acclaim rolled out of Australian Air Ferry's hangar in California.

The first take-off out of Kerrville Texas was where our education started, the cloud base was at 1,000ft and in no time at all we found ourselves sitting at 10,000ft, in the sunshine, above a miserable overcast day below.

The aircraft maintained 1200ft/min all the way to 10,000ft, and at times reached 1500ft/min. After arriving at 10,000ft we trimmed out and set up a modest cruise power setting and noticed that the TAS was already at 190 knots, we're not even trying yet.

After two re-fuel and take-off's we ask the controller for 19,000ft for cruise. And you can tell that he thinks you've made a mistake, he's thinking what would a Mooney be doing at 19,000ft .

After asking two or three times we get cleared to 19,000ft, as we passed through 18,000ft the Mooney maintains an impressive 1300ft/min climb rate. The manifold pressure is still at its original setting and the climb rate actually increases as if it's telling you it likes it here, the higher the better.

The reason Mooney set a ceiling of 25,000ft, is because of the physical demands on the occupants, not because the Mooney runs out of steam there. The turbine waste gates open as it gets into the higher altitudes and it maintains full manifold pressure all the way there.

After a couple of days in California, tanking the aircraft, we dragged ourselves out of bed very early in the morning, we wanted to be airborne right on first light.

Even though we've got ferry fuel in the cabin there's no doubt in my mind that it would maintain an impressive climb rate. And it was no surprise to see 900ft/min even at max take-off weight.

We stayed at 8,000ft for the first four hours, just burning off fuel and checking and double checking that everything was working as it was supposed to.

After four hours we asked for a clearance to 18,000ft, and within ten minutes we we're sitting at 18,000ft, and I was thinking that I should have come up earlier.

The TAS at 8,000ft was 160knots, on a long range power setting, and we had a ten knot tail wind. After climbing to 18,000ft we had a TAS of 210 knots and a ten climbing to twenty knot tail wind, we often saw groundspeeds of 220 knots. The total distance from California to Hawaii is 2100nm and we landed in Hawaii in under eleven hours. That means we'd averaged 190 knots.

The aircraft has 11.5 hours of oxygen for one person, so even though we'd maintained 18,000ft for more than six hours we hadn't used half the available oxygen.

After spending a full day in Hawaii we were ready to do it all again, and this time we'd go straight through to American Samoa.



Macleay Aircraft Maintenance www.macleayaircraft.com.au Phone: +61 2 6563 1406

With the same fuel on board we managed to duplicate the previous leg, except we had better tail winds and we managed to cover 2400nm in eleven hours and twenty minutes, an average groundspeed of 212 knots.

There's a tropical depression sitting between Noumea and Australia so we take an extra day in American Samoa, to study the weather and prepare the aircraft.

Our third day did not go so well. The hop to Fiji and then onto Noumea went exceptionally well, with an average groundspeed in excess of 210 knots, but the headwinds on the last sector from Noumea to Brisbane peaked at 60 knots.

We descended from 20,000ft to 8,000ft where the headwinds were still on the nose, but were reduced to 25 knots.

After a total time of twelve hours and twenty minutes air bourn we touched down in Brisbane, the Pacific crossing had been completed in three flying days.



There's a lot of engine under this nose cowling.

The Mooney Acclaim is not much slower than your regional airlines turbo prop aircraft. It will cruise comfortably at 20,000ft or up to 25,000ft.

During the flight I was thinking that this aircraft is extremely safe, most small aircraft are cruising below 10,000ft. All your regional airlines and small jets are cruising at 20,000ft to 30,000ft. And all your heavy jets are cruising at 30,000ft to 40,000ft. There's very few aircraft cruising between 10,000ft to 20,000ft. This is an ideal altitude for our Mooney, and with very few small piston aircraft able to keep up, you'll find yourself travelling alone.

When we first backed the aircraft into the hangar in California we noticed that the wing span had been increased, it's a lot wider than the old Mooney. It is also heavier, we found we needed two people to manoeuvre it, everything has been strengthened I suspect.

The cockpit boasts a Garmin 1000 glass cockpit with an integrated autopilot and transponder.

This new Mooney Acclaim has a similar look to its predecessors, however there's an entirely new and exciting dimension to this model.



The new Mooney Acclaim at Las Angeles (Riverside) airport.

IF OWNING THE WORLD'S FASTEST PISTON ENGINE SINGLE IS YOUR DREAM, GIVE US A CALL...



AUSTRALIAN SALES TOUR
 Book your place now for a demo ride in the new 237 ft Mooney Acclaim at an airport near you during February/March 2008. Contact the Australian Sales Centre: Ramsay Aviation Maintenance Services (03) 5722 3726

www.mooney.org.au

There has never been a better time to upgrade to the best:

- the latest Garmin 1000 IFR glass cockpit added to a proven reliable airframe - great value from the SA
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Hawker Beechcraft Corporation Appoints Cessna Alum Russ Meyer III

WICHITA, Kan. (Feb. 20, 2008) – Hawker Beechcraft Corporation (HBC), the world’s leading business, special-mission and trainer aircraft manufacturer, is pleased to announce the appointment of Russell (Russ) W. Meyer III as director of new product development, effective March 3, 2008. Meyer will be responsible for a number of new product development programs, including the management of risk sharing partners. As Hawker Beechcraft continues to build and deliver one of the most advanced product lineups in the industry, Meyer will play a critical role in helping the company sustain its outstanding momentum in the competitive general-aviation market, through the development and design of state-of-the-art, innovative concepts.

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“Russ has demonstrated exemplary leadership and product development program skills and we are very excited to have him on our team,” said Randy Nelson, Hawker Beechcraft senior vice president, product development and engineering. “His rich experience and knowledge of the industry will help Hawker Beechcraft continue to deliver innovative new products to our many valued customers worldwide.”

Meyer comes to HBC from Cessna Aircraft Company, where he spent the last 13 years in a number of leadership roles with increasing responsibility. In his most recent position as program manager, he led the development and certification of the company’s new Citation Mustang. He also worked in aircraft sales and as Eastern division sales manager, where he managed the single engine piston aircraft sales and Cessna Pilot Center programs in the eastern United States and Canada.

Prior to Cessna, Meyer spent two years as a project pilot for Honeywell, Inc. in Phoenix, Ariz., where he was an avionics expert for customer support and training.

Meyer also served in the United States military as a flight lead F-16 pilot in the U.S. Air Force, Air National Guard. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Wake Forest University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of South Carolina.

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