

AOPA Update

Mississippi Airports
Conference
September 2024



Stacey Heaton
Southern Regional Manager



Stacey Heaton **Southern Regional** **Manager**

- Airport and State Legislative Advocacy
- Airport Support Network Volunteer Program (440+ volunteers)
- 8+ States: KY, TN, NC, SC, GA, FL, AL, MS & PR
- 65,000+ members in the Southern Region
- Florida Institute of Technology, BS
The Ohio State University, MA
- Comm, Instrument, Multi, CFI

Topics for Today

- Overview AOPA
- State of General Aviation
- Airport Support Network/Southern Region Issues
- Unleaded Fuel Update
- Hangar Survey
- Wrap Up



THE **MISSION** OF **AOPA**

85

YEARS YOUNG

GENERAL AVIATION SAFETY

SAFEST YEAR IN OVER 20 YEARS

ADVOCACY

TRAINING, TECHNICAL SUPPORT

WE ARE A

COMMUNITY

300,000+ MEMBERS FLYING
200,000+ GA AIRCRAFT

AOPA FOUNDATION

100% FREE H.S. STEM
CURRICULUM

22% FEMALE
49% MINORITIES

2024 – a *very special year*



AOPA's 85th birthday!

Celebrated the history and contributions of general aviation since 1939!

A captivating DC Flyover for the general public occurred May 11th

State of GA

Simply stated, the skies have never been busier. The past few years have shown the advantages and flexibility of GA to individuals and businesses

GA operations around the country have exceeded pre-COVID levels.

Up almost 30% (FAA top 77 airports).

Student, Commercial, and Private Pilot **Certificate numbers have all increased** over the past four years!

Flight schools are busy.

AOPA Poll: Nearly 60% of schools say business is stronger than pre-COVID-19

GAMA reports **increases in helicopter and piston deliveries;** try finding a used aircraft for sale!

Airport Support Network

- Happy 26th Anniversary!
- Critical component of AOPA Airport Advocacy
- 2250 Volunteers nationwide and growing
- Accepting Volunteers at both Public and Private Airports
- Volunteer Today!
- 2 easy steps to Volunteer:
 - 1) Find out if your airport needs a Volunteer at: [AOPA.org/ASN](https://www.aopa.org/ASN)
 - 2) Click “Volunteer Today”

Key Advocacy Issues in Southern Region

- Landing fees
- Massive hikes in hangar rentals with little advance notice
- High density development around ends of runways
- Class C Modifications (PBI, DAB, JAX, ILM)
- Minimum Standards and Rules and Regulations updates
- Poor communications to tenants on projects that impact them

Avgas/Unleaded Fuel

“If this was easy, it would have been done already”

-- Mark Baker





<https://www.aopa.org/advocacy/100-unleaded-avgas>

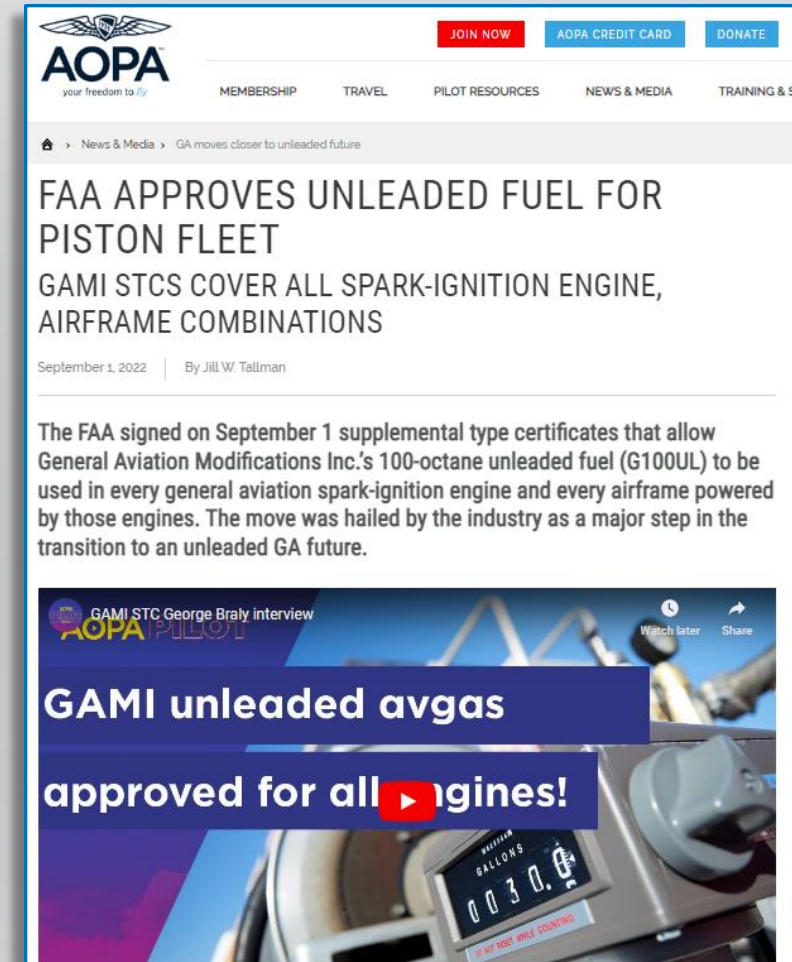
Avgas/Unleaded Fuel

- AOPA, GA industry all want lead out of avgas
 - However, the transition must be safe and smart
 - High compression engines require 100 octane
- Most pressing issue GA has faced in years
 - The work toward unleaded fuel dates back years
 - Millions of \$\$ spent on finding the solution
 - Some locales playing dangerous politics
- EPA 2023 endangerment finding: heightening the urgency



Unleaded Fuel: Progress

- FAA granted STC approval for GAMI's G100UL for vast majority of piston aircraft
 - GAMI working through commercialization to bring to airports
 - *“Without AOPA, we couldn’t have gotten this done.”* (GAMI’s George Braly)
- Swift anticipates unleaded 100R STC approval in 2024
 - Some lower-compression aircraft can use its 94-octane UL
- One fuel (LyondellBasell) in testing under the FAA’s PAFI program
- Stay informed and engaged at www.aopa.org/100UL



For Aviation Leaders . . .

- 100LL AvGas will continue to be refined and distributed until production of unleaded 100 octane fuel is ramped up
- Goal: Unleaded 100 octane fuel will be completely fungible - Can be mixed with 100LL in airport tanks, trucks and in aircraft
- Inform your local elected leaders of this significant development
- Do NOT discontinue 100LL sales! Safety issue!
- Contact AOPA if your City/County is considering a “Ban on 100LL”

For Aviation Leaders, continued

FROM FLYEAGLE.ORG: WHAT ACTIONS CAN AIRPORTS TAKE TO MINIMIZE LEAD EXPOSURE AND AID IN THE TRANSITION?

- In the short-term, airports, Fixed-Base Operators (FBO), and airport users can take steps to reduce or minimize potential exposure to aircraft lead emissions:
 - Work to offer additional unleaded fuel types to facilitate the transition.
 - A key enabling step may include installing additional fuel infrastructure, e.g., an additional tank or a fuel truck. Alternatively, airports may be able to utilize a spare tank.
 - Minimize engine idling time and run-up times of piston-engine aircraft
 - Promote airport and pilot awareness
 - Increase distance between pre-flight/maintenance run-up locations and people on/off airports by relocating run-up locations or distributing run-ups to multiple locations.

These measures are summarized at a dedicated [FAA webpage](https://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/avgas/env_airports).
https://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/avgas/env_airports

On-Going Analysis of Hangar Space for General Aviation

Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association with State Sponsorship



Methodology

- **Research Goal:**
 - Benchmark available supply & demand for General Aviation (GA) hangars
 - Identify challenges & obstacles faced by airport managers
- **AOPA & State Sponsors built two Qualtrics online surveys:**
 - Pilots were questioned about current storage, current waiting list status, and ideal storage preferences
 - Managers were questioned about current occupancy, pricing, impact to airport economics, and perception of development challenges
- **Data Quality:**
 - 75,000 pilots in Alaska, Colorado, Maryland, Washington, Louisiana (FAA Civil Airmen Stats)
 - More than 9% of AOPA Members in respective states replied to the survey (~2000/24000)
 - 80% of pilots & managers who started a survey completed the survey
 - Results are representative in aggregate - +/- 2% Margin of Error, at 95% confidence

Current Economics

- Responding airports shared that hangars are funded ***privately (73%)***, funded by the airport sponsor (**54%**), funded by commercial hangar operators (**33%**).
- ***81% of managers report*** hangars are ***managed by the airport sponsor***
- ***Hangars generate 39%*** of gross revenue. According to Managers:
 - 75% believe hangars are very important to aircraft owners & customers
 - 64% believe hangars are very important to the financial health of their airport
- ***Overall, 97% of hangars are occupied***
- ***Overall, 65% of responding airports have a waitlist - avg is 4 years***
- The oldest set of hangars is ***58 years old***. ***Well maintained hangars can be used for longer than 60 years - should be considered in amortization.***

Future Development

- To empty current waitlists would ***require 50-60% more hangars.***
- No responding airports had no land available for development.
- 63% of airport managers confirmed hangars included in the ALP/Master Plan.
- Airport managers prefer to have additional hangars funded the same way as their current hangars.
- Only 16% of pilots want a land lease for constructing a private hangar.
 - Those who are interested would overwhelmingly prefer a box hangar
- Overall, the top 3 issues preventing future development are:
 - Funding/Financing
 - Material Costs
 - Grant Availability

Conclusions

- ***Lack of hangars is preventing pilots from joining the GA Community:***
 - 37% of non-owner pilots are waiting to buy an aircraft until there is available storage
 - A recent survey of AOPA members found that 60% of future aircraft owners report that finding storage is a barrier to aircraft ownership
 - Pilots who own aircraft fly more often and visit the airport regularly
- ***Pilots are willing to pay more for better storage options:***
 - The average price that owners are willing to pay for the hangar of their choice at the location of their choice is above the current average lease rate and above the average wait list lease rate
- ***Pilots will follow supply, but want to stay where they are:***
- ***Airports need to build 50-60% more hangars to satisfy current demand:***
 - Placing pilots currently on the waitlist will generate significant revenue, \$600k just among the airports that responded
 - Land is available but airports still find funding a significant challenge to development

Solutions....

- *T-Hangar solve the Hangar Shortage!*
- *Airport Sponsors must find innovative funding solutions to develop hangars*
- *T-Hangars on the Master Plan and ALP?*
- *Hangar Wait List – is it “Healthy”?*
- *Land Lease terms competitive and attractive?*
- *Compliant with FAA Hangar Use Policy?*
- *AOPA will keep fighting for Hangar funding!*

Elsewhere at AOPA...



Latest AOPA Sweepstakes Cessna 182

The straight-tail 1958 Cessna 182 is the perfect choice as its not only the most popular and versatile GA aircraft, but also because this model and year graced the first cover of AOPA Pilot Magazine in 1958!

Find project updates and a list of contributors at www.aopa.org/sweeps



2024: Straight-tail 1958 Cessna 182



Join AOPA Today!

New Member?

**Hop online and join with code: 23GOVA10
and get \$10 off.**

**Already a member? Renew with this QRCode to
get \$10 off a PPS or higher renewal rate:**



Questions?

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