

# CAP, CESSNA REACH FOR THE SKIES

Civil Air Patrol and Cessna recently celebrated a milestone, the “8,000th Single Engine Delivery” of a new red-white-and-blue CAP Cessna. The celebration is one of many milestones in this decades-long partnership.

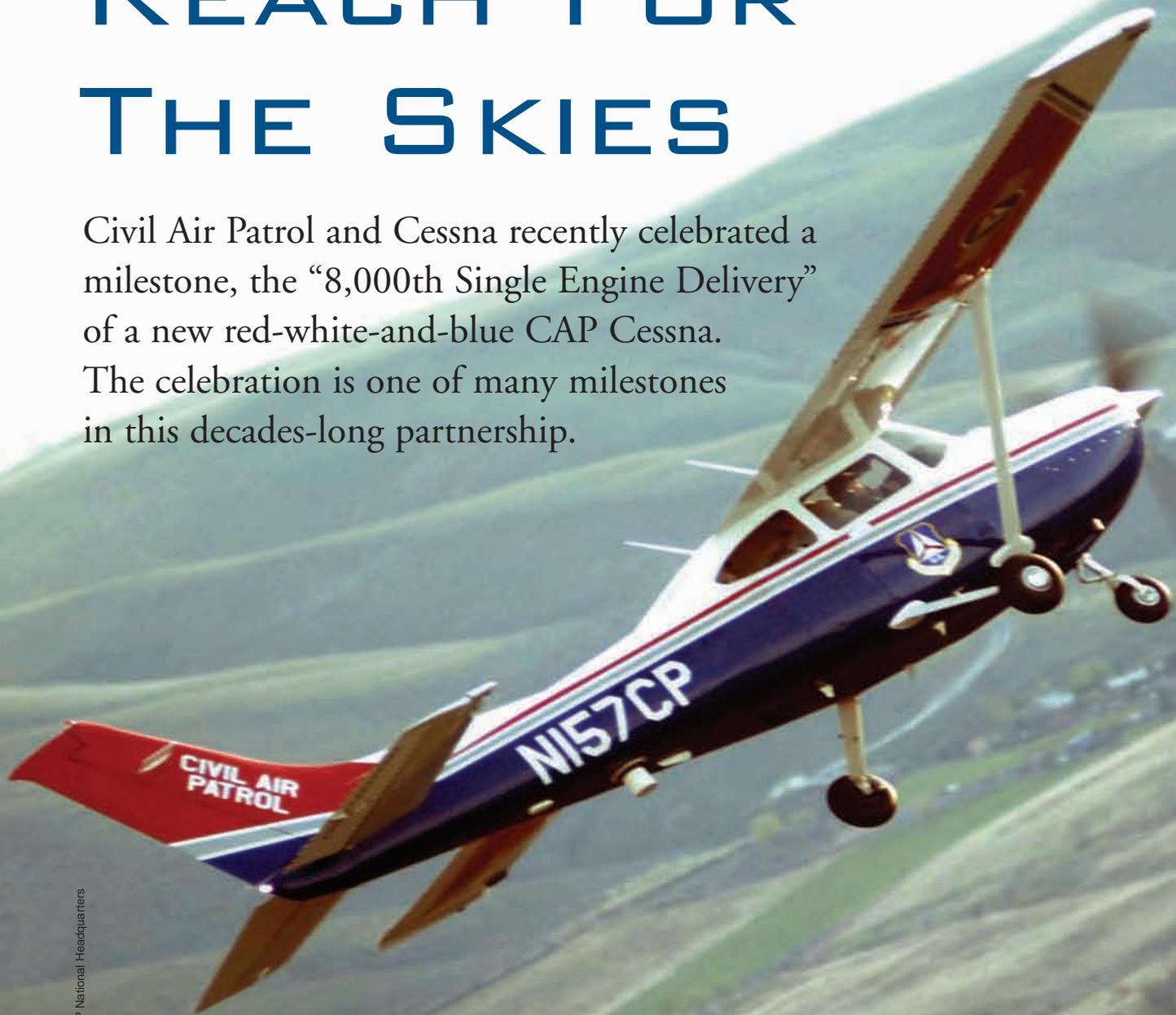


Photo by Susan Robertson, CAP National Headquarters

# Celebration Highlights

# Partnership

By Neil Probst

**M**embers of the Mississippi Wing aircrew thought they were taking a routine trip to Independence, Kan. Their objective: Pick up the wing's new

Garmin glass cockpit Cessna 182 Skylane.

Upon arrival, they learned their 182 was the 8,000th single-engine aircraft to come off the plant's assembly lines.

The plane is one of 102 glass cockpit Cessna 182 Skylanes in CAP's fleet of aircraft. Its glass cockpit sets the aircraft apart from the competition.

"This airplane will do so many things a standard airplane won't do as far as situational awareness for the pilots. It makes the mission a lot safer," said Larry Kauffman, director of Fleet Management at CAP National Headquarters.

Below a banner that showed a Civil Air Patrol Cessna 182 alongside the words "8,000th Single Engine Delivery," dozens of guests, including Interim CAP National Commander Brig. Gen. Amy Courter and CAP Executive Director Don Rowland, joined Mississippi Wing Commander Col. Tim Carroll to celebrate the occasion.

"I can think of nobody better to have celebrated this milestone with than one of Cessna's oldest and most

loyal customers," said Cessna Aircraft Co. Chairman, President and CEO Jack Pelton. "Our employees are honored to be affiliated with an organization that has such a strong impact on the aerospace industry and our nation's youth. We're proud to support your efforts by providing safe and reliable aircraft for emergency services missions."

Photo by Susan Robertson, CAP National Headquarters



Roger Whyte, Cessna's senior vice president of sales and marketing, presents Interim National Commander Brig. Gen. Amy Courter with a congratulatory plaque and the keys to a CAP Cessna 182 Skylane, the 8,000th single-engine aircraft built at the Independence, Kan., plant.

"It's a big day for us and a very exciting day, because we get this special privilege of handing this aircraft over to the Civil Air Patrol. We send our airplanes all over the world, and we're particularly proud our largest fleet of aircraft is with Civil Air Patrol," said Roger Whyte, Cessna's senior vice president of sales and marketing.

Whyte said the 182 the Mississippi Wing picked up was the 177th Cessna built for Civil Air Patrol since the opening of the plant in 1997.

Courter contributed to the event with her own salute to the aircraft maker.

"As the national commander of CAP, it is my distinct honor to be here with these great partners. Truly, for us, when we think about our searches and search platforms, it's very important to have the best technology, and the Cessnas we fly, as well as the Garmin technology, are the very best," she said. ▲

# From Bird Dog to Skylane

CAP Aircrews Get It Done in Cessnas

By Neil Probst and Drew Steketee

Early Cessna aircraft, like the pioneering Airmaster, flew with CAP as far back as World War II Coastal Patrol. But it wasn't until the early 1970s that CAP began equipping squadrons with corporate-owned Cessnas, initially 234 Cessna L-19 O-1 Bird Dog observation planes and later, military surplus T-41 Mescalero trainers based on the Cessna 172.

Thus, the stage was set for a future relationship with Cessna, the world's largest manufacturer of General

Aviation (non-airline) aircraft.

"The L-19 was slow enough and you had such excellent visibility," said Lt. Col. Gary Hanson, former commander of South Bay Senior Squadron in Torrance, Calif. "It was the perfect airplane for flying a search mission, especially in mountainous terrain. I really fell in love with it."

The squadron flew the L-19 until the mid-1980s.

By the early 1990s, CAP began to transition to Cessna 172s, 182s and 206s as the standard CAP-owned aircraft. CAP's first fleet purchase began with some 100 Cessna 172s in the mid-1980s — reportedly the last single-engine Cessnas built before the compa-

ny's piston-engine production was suspended in 1986.

After production resumed with the new C-172R in 1997, CAP began buying 172s and 182s from the aircraft maker's new Independence, Kan., facility.

Later, Cessna 172Rs and the new 172S featured a more powerful 180-horsepower engine well suited to higher terrain searches and three-person CAP mission crews. CAP also is



Photo by Susan Robertson, CAP National Headquarters

The Cessna L-19 O-1 Bird Dog in front of Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters represents an era in CAP during the 1970s to late 1980s when members flew surplus military aircraft for search and rescue and other missions.



1980s-era CAP Cessnas flew incognito in civilian paint schemes for anti-drug operations. Today's aircraft carry Civil Air Patrol's proud red-white-and-blue corporate-standard paint scheme.

currently a leading customer for the even more powerful 230-horsepower Cessna 182.

“Today, we are the largest single user of Cessna aircraft in the world,” said CAP national historian and 50-year member Col. Len Blascovich. CAP’s fleet of 535 aircraft consists mostly of Cessna 182 Skylanes, 172 Skyhawks, 206 Stationairs and a few older 185 Skywagons.

Recently, Cessna shifted all single-engine production to glass cockpit avionics, replacing mechanical “steam gauge” instruments with flat-screen electronic presentations of flight data, navigation information and engine instrumentation.

CAP followed suit, equipping its newest aircraft to fly with superb position and terrain awareness using integrated Global Positioning System satellite



Photo courtesy of CAP Historical Foundation

Many aviation historians compare the performance of Cessna's efficient, ahead-of-its-time Airmaster of the 1930s with the Cessna 172 of today. This member-owned Airmaster flew at Coastal Patrol Base 14 in Panama City, Fla., during World War II.

## Before Cessna

Member-owned aircraft dominated CAP's fleet through the 1950-1960s, with some 4,000 member planes supplementing hundreds of World War II surplus L-4 Piper Cubs and 332 post-war L-16 Aeroncas, according to CAP Historical Foundation founder and executive director Drew Steketee.

In 1952, the Air Force allowed CAP to fly its L-16s still in Air Force inventory. Those airplanes, later owned by CAP, were flown until about 1970, he said.

“They were great ‘low and slow’ airplanes for search missions, but their modest cruise performance meant it took hours to get to the mission base!” Steketee said.

navigation and computer-based air navigation and terrain map databases. Search grids can also be depicted over terrain mapping.

Just as the modern corporate-owned Cessnas were an enticement for pilots to fly with CAP in the 1990s, the “glass cockpit” Cessna of this decade offers them the latest in aviation technology to do their job and enjoy doing it! ▲

Photo courtesy of CAP Historical Foundation



A Mississippi Wing L-19 exhibits the single stripe paint scheme many CAP aircraft wore before today's new corporate livery was unveiled in the late 1990s.



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