

The FAA recently issued a Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) that dealt with foam filled elevator trim tabs. These trim tabs were used on the 1960 through 1984 210/T210 and P210 aircraft as well as the 1968 through 1984 206 and 207 series. Three Cessna service bulletins were mentioned in the SAIB. There appears to be some confusion as to what the issues are and what each service bulletin applies to.

From 1960 thru 1984 Cessna used a foam core inside the elevator trim tab and elevator trailing edge of all models of the Cessna 210. A foam core was also used on the elevator trim tab and elevator trailing edge of the 1968 thru 1984 206 and 207 models. The purpose of the foam core was to act as a lightweight spacer to help the surface retain its proper shape. Because the foam used was a closed cell foam it was initially felt that moisture retention would not be a problem.

After these foam cored surfaces had been in use for many years it became apparent that moisture was a problem. What would happen is that for various reasons a section of the foam would get delaminated from the skin it was attached to. Moisture would get trapped in the pocket this delamination created and the skin would begin to corrode from the inside out. By the time the corrosion became detectable as visible spots of corrosion, paint blisters, unsealing of the edges the damage was sufficient that the trim tab or trailing edge would have to be replaced.

Cessna developed a new trim tab and elevator trailing edge for the 206 series, 207 series and the 1964 thru 1984 210 series that uses plastic spacers instead of a foam core. The replacements for the 1960 thru 1963 210 series still have the foam core but are supposedly filled with an "improved" foam and better sealed.

**SE85-7 ELEVATOR AND TRIM TAB INSPECTION** In 1985 Cessna issued service bulletin SE85-7 which called out for inspection of the trim tab and elevator trailing edge on the above aircraft and replacement of parts as necessary. Cessna considers this inspection as "Recommended", CPA considers it a "Must Do" at each annual or 100 hours. The elevator and trim tab inspection adds only a few minutes time if performed as part of a annual or 100 hour inspection. If replacement is required new trim tabs run from \$1200 to \$1900 depending on model and elevator trailing edges cost from \$225 to about \$650. Labor varies depending on model and aircraft condition.

Another problem appeared with the trim tab in the late 1980s. Cracks were developing in the area of the push rod attach bracket. This was not directly related to the corrosion problem but of course if corrosion was present in this area it would be easier for cracks to develop. Cessna came out with a kit to install doublers top and bottom on the trim tab reduce the possibility of cracks developing. The kit instructions also called for additional drain holes to be drilled in the tab.

**SEB92-1 ELEVATOR TRIM TAB MODIFICATION** In 1992 Cessna issued service bulletin SEB92-1 that calls out for the installation of kit SK210-139 that installs doublers in the area of the trim tab push rod bracket. Cessna considered installation

of this kit “Recommended” and CPA concurs. Cost of the kit today is around \$125 and takes 5 man hours to install.

A third problem developed on a limited number of aircraft. It turns out that replacement elevator trim tab p/n 1234665-10 shipped from Cessna between March 29, 1999 and April 22, 2000 might have insufficient bonding strength of the trim tab skin to the trim tab spar. Cessna determined that adding additional rivets to the suspect trim tabs would assure that the required strength was present.

**SEB00-6 ELEVATOR TRIM TAB MODIFICATION In 2000 Cessna issued service bulletin SEB00-6 which calls out for the installation of 24 additional rivets on p/n 1234665-10 Elevator Trim Tab Assembly shipped from Cessna between March 29, 1999 and April 22, 2000.** Cessna considers the modification as “Mandatory” and CPA concurs. Cessna offered 3.5 hours warranty labor for the year after the service bulletin was released, that warranty period has now expired.

**On January 20, 2005 the FAA issued a Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) CE-05-27. This bulletin outlines the history of the corrosion problems with the trim tabs on many of the 200 series aircraft and references the SEB85-7 service bulletin listed above.** The FAA confines its remarks solely to the trim tab and does not mention the elevator trailing edge that the service bulletin also covers. The FAA also mentions service bulletins SEB92-1 and SEB00-6 which, while trim tab related, have nothing to do with the corrosion problem. The FAA recommends, but does not mandate, replacement of all foam filled p/n 1234628-1 trim tabs with the new tabs without foam. CPA concurs to the extent when regular inspection shows there is a corrosion issue with the trim tab. CPA further adds that the elevator trailing edge should be inspected regularly as well.

Posted on the web site will be the mentioned service bulletins, the SAIB and pertinent information from CPA publications.