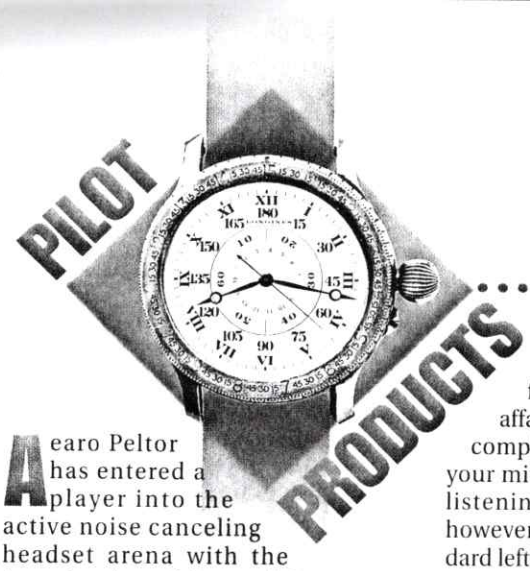


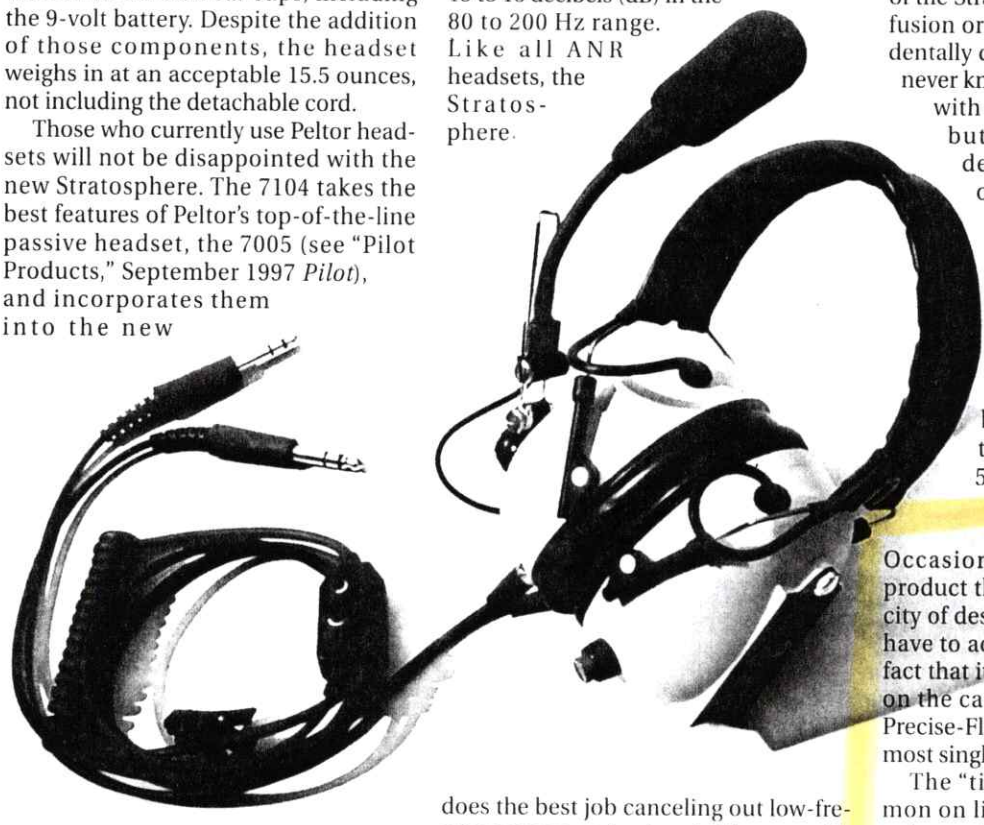
Aearo Peltor Stratosphere

Aearo Peltor has entered a player into the active noise canceling headset arena with the introduction of the model 7104 ANR Stratosphere headset.

Peltor engineers have located all of the active noise canceling hardware within the headset ear cups, including the 9-volt battery. Despite the addition of those components, the headset weighs in at an acceptable 15.5 ounces, not including the detachable cord.

Those who currently use Peltor headsets will not be disappointed with the new Stratosphere. The 7104 takes the best features of Peltor's top-of-the-line passive headset, the 7005 (see "Pilot Products," September 1997 *Pilot*), and incorporates them into the new ANR model. These features include a mono/stereo selector switch located on the cord's control unit for those who fly airplanes equipped with a stereo intercom. Left/right volume controls have been relocated from the ear cups in the passive attenuating Peltor to the control unit on the cord. The mic boom has also been lifted from the 7005 and used on the Stratosphere. We praised the cleverness of the 7005's boom compared to older Peltors. The fully articulating boom makes finding a comfortable spot a quick and easy affair. The boom can also be swung completely around to accommodate your mic placement preference. Those listening through a stereo intercom, however, will need to stick to the standard left/right setup.

To activate the ANR portion of the headset the user simply presses a red button located at the rear of the right ear cup. According to Peltor, noise is reduced 15 to 18 decibels (dB) in the 80 to 200 Hz range. Like all ANR headsets, the Stratosphere does the best job canceling out low-frequency prop noise. In addition, as with most other ANR headsets, the noise reduction with the electronics turned off is not very good—be sure to carry a spare battery in the airplane. Since the 7104 is a modified 7005, it retains the passive unit's amount of clamping feel but, as we noted with the 7005, we did not find this to cause a headache after a six-hour nonstop flight. The tightness helps to keep the noise down. Even with already good comfort characteristics, we think the 7104 would benefit further from a set of gel ear cushions.



With the detachable cord and self-contained power, the Stratosphere makes a good noise-canceling headset for nonaviation applications, as well. We found that it worked very well with large and small lawn tractors.

Unfortunately, it's hard to tell when the ANR system is turned on, making it easy to forget to turn the electronics off. We managed to drain two of the 9-volt alkaline batteries during our evaluation of the Stratosphere. Whether it was confusion or because the button was accidentally depressed during storage, we'll never know. After spending a little time with the unit, we realized that the button is comparatively more depressed when the system is on, but a more positive indication is still needed.

The Stratosphere lists for $660 but can be found through retailers for as little as $594. For more information, contact Aearo Company, 90 Mechanic Street, Southbridge, Massachusetts 01550; telephone 800/327-6833 or 508/764-5871. —*Peter A. Bedell*

Precise-Flow air vents

Occasionally you stumble across a product that is so elegant in its simplicity of design and engineering that you have to admire it and its designer. The fact that it works well is merely frosting on the cake. Such is the case with the Precise-Flow air vents now available for most single-engine Cessnas.

The "tin can"-style air vents common on light Cessnas are notoriously noisy and leaky. Almost every pilot has a story to tell about the vents sailing out and landing on a passenger's lap or of being doused with snow or rain from a leaky vent.

In seeking ways to improve our 1994 Better Than New 172 sweepstakes airplane, Dennis Wolter—proprietor of AirMod, the Batavia, Ohio, interior shop that did much of the work on the project airplane—developed an entirely new ventilation system. Cessna copied it for the new production 172s and 182s.

Flyer
The Nation's Aviation Newspaper · Since 1949
Incorporating General Aviation News

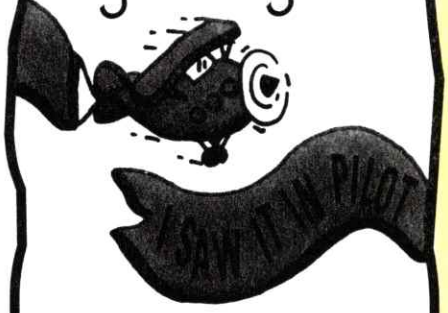
Now in our 50th year serving General Aviation

Each issue includes:
- In The Pink! Classifieds
- National / Regional News
- Calendar of Events
- Pilot Reports
- New Product Reports
- Editorial Opinions

26 Issues for $29
1 Full Year
For your free trial issue, call:
1-888-99-FLYER
POBox 39099 • Tacoma • WA • 98439
www.ganflyer.com

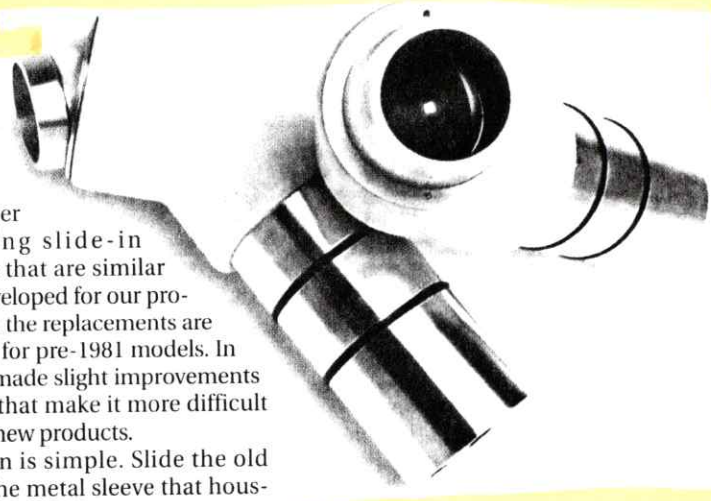
WRITE IN NO. 318 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Tell them when you buy it!



Tell the merchants who support general aviation that you saw their advertisements here. AOPA PILOT. Our advertisers and you – working together to build a future for general aviation.

AOPA PILOT
421 Aviation Way
Frederick, MD 21701
301-695-2053
Fax 301-695-2180



After hearing many requests from owners, instead of the old vents Wolter is now selling slide-in replacements that are similar to what he developed for our project. Currently, the replacements are available only for pre-1981 models. In 1981, Cessna made slight improvements to the design that make it more difficult to retrofit the new products.

Installation is simple. Slide the old vents out of the metal sleeve that houses them. Clean the inside of the sleeve with the supplied Scotch-Brite pad. Smear a dab of the supplied lubricant to the inside of the sleeve and to the outside of the new vents. Then slide the vents into the sleeve. A pair of O-rings keeps the new vents from sliding out and also assures a leak-free fit.

The Wemac nozzles—like those found above airline seats—can be easily positioned to blow air in any direction. When twisted shut, they close tightly.

I installed a set in my 1977 Cessna 172 in a matter of minutes. Even while taxiing, they seem to move more air through the cabin than do the old vents. In flight, they provided a greater volume of air that can be directed right where you want it. All the while, the vents seem quieter than the old ones. When they are closed, they are closed—no leaks.

Everything needed to complete the job is included in the $395 kit, including a copy of the STC and a sample Form 337. Your mechanic will have to sign off the installation.

The Precise-Flow vents cannot accommodate an outside air temperature gauge in them the way the old ones can. It wasn't an issue for me because I have a JP Instruments EDM-700 engine analyzer that includes an electronic OAT gauge. In case you want to relocate your OAT gauge, Wolter's kit includes drill bits, grinding stones, and instructions to aid your mechanic in drilling a hole in the windshield to accommodate the probe. Interestingly, AOPA's aviation specialists could find nothing in the regulations or in the type certificate for the 172 that requires an OAT gauge to be on board—even for IFR flight.

For more information on the Precise-Flow air vents, contact Sporty's Pilot Shop at 800/LIFTOFF (800/543-8633); fax 513/735-9200.

—Thomas B. Haines

BRIEFLY NOTED

A new agreement links **Destination Direct** flight planning software with Pan Am Systems' weather briefing service. Destination Direct, produced by Delta Technology of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is thus able to generate flight routes on a map and overlay current weather graphics. Users can choose from several charts, including Nexrad radar, GOES infrared satellites, and surface analysis. Also included are eight different graphic representations of wind speed and direction. The weather service is purchased separately. Prices for Destination Direct range from $149 to $295. Prices for Pan Am's WeatherMation software is $99 plus $15 a month for the

Alpine Aviation recently made its auxiliary landing light kit available by supplemental type certificate to owners of Beech Travel Airs and Barons. Previously available for Beech Bonanzas, the $1,250 system shines 300,000 candlepower of light forward from the main landing gear. The stand-alone system adds about four pounds to the airplane and can be installed in about five hours. For more information, contact Alpine at 703/567-3103 or visit the Web site (www.alpineaviation.com). —PAB

