

VAA NEWS

EAA Receives Approval From FAA for Vintage DERs

By David Sakrison,
EAA AirVenture Today

EAA's Vintage Aircraft Association (VAA) and the FAA announced Wednesday, July 29, that two years of effort resulted in the approval of a new FAA program to authorize designated engineering representatives for vintage aircraft—"vintage DERs."

The new VDER designation should help reduce the cost and complexity of obtaining engineering approvals for vintage aircraft.

DERs essentially are engineers-for-hire, recognized by the FAA for their knowledge of a particular aircraft system—engines, electrical, structural. The vintage DER (VDER) addition to the designated engineering representative program covers the following:

- Once appointed the authority, the VDER program authorizes a VDER to approve data for only the types of repairs and alterations to vintage airplanes and/or engines that would be eligible for FAA field approvals under FAA Order 8900.1.

- The intent of this authority is to allow individuals who don't meet the conventional DER appointment criteria to become VDERs with limited approval authority in multiple technical specialties for repairs and/or alterations of specific makes of vintage airplanes and/or engines.

- The VDER appointment authority covers vintage airplanes certificated under CAR 3 or an earlier certification basis as well as those manufactured before 1973 that meet all the following parameters:

- Single engine
- Maximum of five places
- Maximum of 7,000 pounds gross takeoff weight
- Nonpressurized
- Noncomposite metallic or wood primary structure

- Note: Vintage engines include all radial engines and all other piston engines manufactured before 1973.

DERs play a crucial role in keeping aircraft flying. When a vintage airplane needs a major repair, a field modification, or a newly fabricated part to replace an original part, the DER is the one who approves the engineering data, certifying that the data are consistent with or superior to the original.

But vintage aircraft present a special challenge. A DER is typically limited to issuing approvals on a particular system or structure. "If you want to hang a 90-horse engine on a plane that left the factory with 65 horses," VAA Executive Director H.G. Frautschy explained, "you might have to hire three DERs to get the engineering approvals—an airframe DER, an engine DER, and a propeller DER," he said. "The cost of hiring those DERs can be prohibitive."

Under the new program, the FAA will begin designating a "new breed" of DERs—vintage DERs—whose demonstrated expertise cov-

ers an entire vintage airplane. They will have "holistic" authority to approve engineering data on any system or structure on a specific aircraft.

The VDER's authority will be limited, however, to one make of aircraft, though a single VDER could apply for and receive separate VDER designations for multiple aircraft.

"This is going to really help people with small, older airplanes," Frautschy said.

The people who have the expertise on these airplanes are in the type clubs, and their expertise is broader and more comprehensive than a single system or structure. "It makes sense," he added, "for the FAA to tap that expertise to assist owners and the FAA."

FAA Small Airplane Directorate Manager Kim Smith told Frautschy, "We're excited [about VDERs] for two reasons: The vintage airplanes [at AirVenture] are beautiful, and it's exciting to help them to stay safe and airworthy. And this is a great example of the aviation community approaching us with an

2009 VAA Hall of Fame Inductee—Steve Pitcairn

The individual selected by the VAA board of directors to be honored with induction into the EAA Vintage Aircraft Association Hall of Fame in 2009 is the late Steve Pitcairn. The son of aviation pioneer Harold Pitcairn, Steve worked tirelessly to honor his father's legacy. He dedicated his personal resources not only to the restoration of vintage aircraft produced by his father's company, but also to the preservation of the history of the first half of the aviation century. Steve will be inducted during the annual EAA Hall of Fame dinner, which will be held October 16, 2009, in EAA's Eagle Hangar. Tickets to this public event are available by contacting EAA's development department at 920-426-6886.



idea that makes sense—that we hadn't thought of.

"It shows what can happen when you work together toward a common goal."

Dave Swartz, of the Anchorage Aircraft Certification Office, was instrumental in getting the VDER program approved and has been tasked with overseeing VDER implementation. He and Smith outlined plans for implementing the program at the FAA.

Smith told Frautschy, "You can get the word out to your members a lot faster than we can communicate with ours. If [applicants] work with us through VAA, that will help smooth out some of the bumps."

Frautschy and Smith agreed that people who want to apply for VDER certification should contact the Vintage Aircraft Association before submitting their applications to the appropriate aircraft certification office. In the days following the announcement, the VAA received nearly a dozen inquiries.

"We can help them submit the application, and we'll work with [the FAA's Smith and Swartz] to get it into the right channels," Frautschy said.

EAA and the VAA are willing to help VDER applicants through the process by reviewing their application materials prior to their submittal to the FAA. As this issue of *Vintage Airplane* was being completed, Randy Hansen, EAA's government relations director, was in the process of finalizing a checklist that can be used by members who wish to apply to become a VDER. For those who already hold a DER designation from the FAA, the checklist can help them create an addendum to add the VDER for the specific make of aircraft for which they wish to become a VDER. Please visit VAA's website at www.VintageAircraft.org for a link to the checklist. EAA and the VAA will not be approving or disapproving any applications. We're not the approving authority; the FAA oversees the program.

The VAA will also be keeping a list of those members who are approved VDERs, and we will be posting that list on the VAA website as those approvals are made by the FAA.

Vintage Area Popular During EAA AirVenture 2009

More than 800 showplanes in the Vintage judging categories were parked as far south as Row 153 this year. In future issues, we'll have plenty of coverage of this year's fly-

in in *Vintage Airplane* and *Vintage Aircraft Online*. The new Vintage Hangar was enthusiastically received by the type club and workshop folks, and the first year of Vintage Aircraft in Review on the asphalt pad in front of the VAA headquarters area was also mentioned as one of the highlights by many of our visitors and members. Check the awards list starting on page 4, and look for more to come on the event in the next few months. 🛩️



Ted Koston in a familiar pose to many longtime EAAs—behind the viewfinder of a Graflex camera.

Koston's first flight, made in 1937, was in a Kinner-powered Bird CK biplane. Ted's lifelong fascination with photography blossomed, and he was soon shooting aircraft on a regular basis. During World War II, he served as a naval aviation photographer aboard the aircraft carrier USS *St. Lo* (ex-USS *Midway*). His naval service also included a stint performing reconnaissance photography in the Marshall Islands and Guam. Returning to Chicago after World War II, he opened his own photography studio and immediately got busy on a number of civilian aviation fronts. He served as:

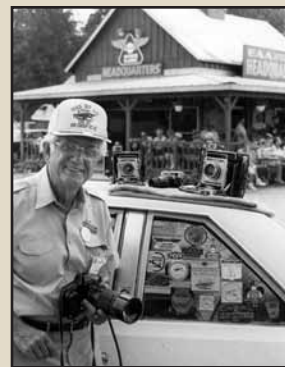
- President of the Illinois Air Pilots Association.
- One of the founding fathers of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Aviation Flotilla 3-8 at Glenview, Illinois.
- A member of the O'Hare Senior Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol; he was named the Civil Air Patrol's Outstanding Information Officer in 1964.
- Director of the Cross and Cockade Midwest Chapter of World War I Aero Historians.
- President of the Illinois Wing of the OX-5 Aviation Pioneers and Historians. In 1994 he was honored by the national OX-5 organization during its annual convention when he was presented with its Aviation Historian of the Year award.

In recognition of his dedication to antique airplanes, he was made an honorary lifetime member of the Midwest Antique Airplane Club in 1972. He's number 3—Dale Crites and Paul Poberezny are numbers 1 and 2, respectively.

Ted was inducted in the Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame in 1994.

Ted Koston 1923-2009

Famed aviation photographer Ted Costopoulos (aka Koston) of Melrose Park, Illinois, passed away Saturday, August 2, at the age of 86. Ted loved aviation and managed to get involved in as many facets of it as he could. Over the past four decades, Ted has blessed EAA with his services as a volunteer photographer. Starting in the 1960s he shot some of the most famous images of EAA and VAA members and their aircraft. He continued to contribute to *Vintage Airplane* on a regular basis, and our archive of images shot by Ted over the years will always be a valued resource. Ted's photography has been published in EAA publications and all over the world. For his broad dedication to the world of vintage airplanes and the people who fly them, he was inducted into the EAA Vintage Aircraft Association Hall of Fame in 2001.



Fellow aviation photographer Eric Lundahl captured Ted with a few of his favorite cameras in front of the VAA Red Barn, an area of the EAA fly-in he documented for decades.