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ICON Aircraft Releases Production Details on A5's Angle of Attack System

LOS ANGELES (July 22, 2013) – ICON Aircraft released details this week about its Angle of Attack (AoA) system, a safety feature that will be standard on the company's A5 Light Sport Aircraft. ICON has completed the design, development, and testing of its AoA system, a feature rarely seen in General Aviation aircraft. ICON has also released a new video demonstrating the safety benefits and real-world implications of flying with AoA.

Link to AoA video: <http://www.iconaircraft.com/video-icon-aircraft-a5-angle-of-attack.html>

The A5's AoA gauge delivers an intuitive graphical indication of the plane's stall margin based on wing performance. Traditionally, pilots must evaluate an airplane's proximity to stalling by observing the airspeed indicator; however, stall speed varies in relation to wing loading, something that an airspeed indicator does not account for. Pilots flying by airspeed are therefore forced to compensate for factors such as weight, g-load, aircraft center of gravity, and wind gusts. On the other hand, AoA is a single, easily understood metric that provides the pilot instantaneous information about how much lift the wing can deliver before it stalls. AoA gauges are common in military fighter aircraft, though cost and complexity have historically prevented their widespread use in General Aviation airplanes.

"Angle of Attack is likely the single most important parameter that helps a pilot fly safely at all times, and yet this information has not been made readily available in small planes," said ICON Aircraft Founder and CEO Kirk Hawkins. "Part of ICON's mission is to produce one of the safest light aircraft ever

created; incorporating an intuitive AoA system in the A5 is just another example of that commitment. Every fighter pilot in the world relies on AoA to help them land, keep them safe from unintended stalls, and max perform their aircraft. This safety technology should be available to more pilots—especially new pilots and those flying small aircraft. ICON’s AoA gauge removes the ambiguity associated with using airspeed and gives our pilots a direct indication of how their wing is performing at any given time.”

The A5’s AoA readings incorporate a unique ICON design that intuitively conveys how the wing is flying. The gauge is positioned at the top of the instrument cluster, keeping it as close to the pilot’s line of sight as possible, and incorporates green, yellow, and red sectors to quickly convey how the wing is performing in real time.

The FAA has acknowledged the importance of Angle of Attack to small aircraft safety. An FAA Advisory Circular published in August 2012 suggests that a reduction in AoA is the single most important response in the event of a stall. The report emphasizes that AoA gauges allow the pilot to quickly assess the stall margin, which is useful in a wide range of scenarios—from preemptively responding to an impending stall to safely max performing the airplane while maintaining complete awareness of the available safety margin.

“The AoA gauge is an important reflection of how we think about flying and safety at ICON,” added Hawkins. “By once again synthesizing great design and engineering with outstanding user interface, ICON’s AoA gauge will make flying safer, more intuitive, and a lot more fun.”

For more information, visit www.iconaircraft.com.

ABOUT ICON AIRCRAFT:

ICON Aircraft is a consumer sport plane manufacturer founded in response to the new sport flying category created by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in 2004. ICON’s first plane is the A5, an amphibious sport aircraft that fuses outstanding aeronautical engineering with world-class product design. It has won some of the world’s most prestigious design awards and has inspired a global following. The company has received more than 940 order deposits and has started manufacturing components of the first production aircraft. ICON Aircraft’s facilities are in Southern California, a hotbed for automotive design and aerospace engineering.

ABOUT FAA LIGHT SPORT AIRCRAFT & SPORT PILOT CLASSIFICATIONS:

In 2004, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) created a new classification of easy-to-fly and affordable two-person airplanes called Light Sport Aircraft. These airplanes enable a new classification of Sport Pilots to fly in lower altitude, uncongested airspace, during the daytime, and in good weather. The Sport Pilot License focuses on the fundamentals of flying and requires a minimum of 20 hours of in-flight training, undercutting the time and cost of a traditional Private Pilot License by about 50%. The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) has described the new rules as “the biggest change in aviation in 50 years.”

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