

**Note 1:** If the statement in paragraph (a) of this AD has been incorporated into the general revisions of the AFM, the general revisions may be incorporated into the AFM, and the copy of this AD may then be removed from the AFM.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(b) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, New York Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, New York ACO.

**Note 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the New York ACO.

#### Special Flight Permits

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on July 22, 2003.

**Kalene C. Yanamura,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-CE-28-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Cessna Aircraft Company Models 172R, 172S, 182S, 182T, T182T, 206H, and T206H Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to certain Cessna Aircraft Company (Cessna) Models 172R, 172S, 182S, 182T, T182T, 206H, and T206H airplanes that are equipped with a Honeywell KAP 140 autopilot computer system installed on the center instrument control panel near the throttle. This proposed AD would require you to install an update to the operating software of the KAP 140 autopilot computer system, change the unit's part number, and change the software modification identification tab.

This proposed AD is the result of reports of inadvertent and undetected engagement of the autopilot system. The actions specified by this proposed AD are intended to prevent unintentionally engaging the KAP 140 autopilot computer system, which could cause the pilot to take inappropriate actions.

**DATES:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) must receive any comments on this proposed rule on or before September 22, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments to FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-CE-28-AD, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. You may view any comments at this location between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may also send comments electronically to the following address: 9-ACE-7-Docket@faa.gov. Comments sent electronically must contain "Docket No. 2003-CE-28-AD" in the subject line. If you send comments electronically as attached electronic files, the files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII text.

You may get service information that applies to this proposed AD from Cessna Aircraft Company, Product Support, P.O. Box 7706, Wichita, Kansas 67277; telephone: (316) 517-5800; facsimile: (316) 942-9006 and Honeywell, Business, Regional, and General Aviation, 23500 W. 105th Street, Olathe, Kansas 66061. You may also view this information at the Rules Docket at the address above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dan Withers, Aerospace Engineer, Wichita Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, 1801 Airport Road, Mid-Continent Airport, Wichita, Kansas 67209; telephone: (316) 946-4196; facsimile: (316) 946-4407.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Comments Invited

*How Do I Comment on This Proposed AD?*

The FAA invites comments on this proposed rule. You may submit whatever written data, views, or arguments you choose. You need to include the proposed rule's docket number and submit your comments to the address specified under the caption **ADDRESSES**. We will consider all comments received on or before the closing date. We may amend this proposed rule in light of comments received. Factual information that supports your ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the

effectiveness of this proposed AD action and determining whether we need to take additional rulemaking action.

#### *Are There Any Specific Portions of This Proposed AD I Should Pay Attention To?*

The FAA specifically invites comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed rule that might suggest a need to modify the rule. You may view all comments we receive before and after the closing date of the proposed rule in the Rules Docket. We will file a report in the Rules Docket that summarizes each contact we have with the public that concerns the substantive parts of this proposed AD.

#### *How Can I Be Sure FAA Receives My Comment?*

If you want FAA to acknowledge the receipt of your mailed comments, you must include a self-addressed, stamped postcard. On the postcard, write "Comments to Docket No. 2003-CE-28-AD." We will date stamp and mail the postcard back to you.

#### Discussion

##### *What Events Have Caused This Proposed AD?*

We have received reports of an unsafe condition on certain Cessna Models 172R, 172S, 182S, 182T, T182T, 206H, and T206H airplanes that are equipped with a Honeywell KAP 140 autopilot computer system.

The KAP 140 autopilot computer system is located on the lower portion of the center instrument control panel near the throttle on these Cessna airplanes. Because of this location on the instrument control panel of the affected Cessna airplanes, the Autopilot Engage (AP) button could unintentionally be depressed when the pilot pushes the throttle knob forward. The pilot could also unintentionally engage the autopilot system by inadvertently bumping the Heading (HDG) button, Altitude (ALT) mode-select button, or Autopilot Engage (AP) button on the KAP 140 computer. Unless intentionally engaged, the pilot does not know that the autopilot system is engaged.

The Honeywell KAP 140 autopilot computer system is also installed in the New Piper, Inc. Model PA-28-181 airplanes. This proposed AD would not affect these airplanes because of the location of the equipment. The equipment is installed on the center instrument panel near the throttle on the affected airplanes, but is installed in the upper half of the instrument control