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TimeTrac[®] Application Scenarios

Aircraft Leasing Companies

Problem:

Current methods of tracking usage of leased aircraft often rely primarily on “honest” self-reporting by the lessor. Since many aircraft leasing company’s fee structure is based on usage, there is potential for the current reporting system to be manipulated to benefit the lessor by disconnecting the hour meter.

Solution:

With TimeTrac, aircraft usage can be monitored with much greater detail, eliminating the dependency on manually entered flight times and/or reporting manipulation. Each time an aircraft is flown the TimeTrac system records dates, times and locations enabling leasing companies to maintain accurate billing. Additionally, the system can be used to identify a possible deactivation of an hour meter.

The easy-to-use TimeTrac system can download data within minutes of an aircraft landing, enabling aircraft leasing companies to verify flight time "on the spot" or implement a progressive monitoring schedule. Additionally, since TimeTrac can store hundreds of flight legs, lessors can determine the frequency and download when it's convenient.

Real World Example:

An aircraft leasing company suspected one of its lessors in Alaska was cheating on flight times by installing a hidden on-off switch for the hour meter. The abuse was confirmed when the aircraft was returned from lease and the lessor had forgotten to remove the switch. Because there was no other way of determining actual flight hours, the leasing company speculates that it lost more than \$50,000 in revenue, not to mention the fact that the hours on the aircraft were forever inaccurate. To prevent the occurrence similar situations, the leasing company is installing TimeTrac on its entire fleet and has included text in their lease agreements that clearly articulated penalties for disabling the unit and/or cheating.

Part 135 Operators

Problem:

For maintenance and safety reasons, small air cargo and aircraft-for-hire companies are required by law to keep accurate and accessible aircraft records. If not properly maintained, periodic FAA ramp checks of flight logs can be time-consuming and often frustrating — whether at your home airport or down line.

Most Part 135 operators rely on employees to manually record hour meter readings which are potentially open to errors and misinterpretation. The bottom line — manually recording flight times is frequently inaccurate.

Solution:

The TimeTrac system monitors aircraft usage with much greater detail than manual systems and eliminates the dependence on employees to enter precise and accurate flight times — dates, times and destinations are recorded each time the aircraft is flown. Additionally, TimeTrac provides Part 135 operators with the ability to accurately monitor taxi times and other factors which can affect billing, maintenance, scheduling and related expenses. By dispatching aircraft with a Component Status Report and corresponding hour, reading, FAA ramp checks can be accomplished quickly and conveniently.

Real World Example:

A regional air cargo carrier was having difficulty determining why they were not meeting time before overhaul (TBO) on their reciprocating engines. During an evaluation of the TimeTrac equipment, an inconsistency was identified and linked to a particular pilot. Several instances were found where the time duration between startup to takeoff and landing to shutdown was recorded as one minute — clearly contrary to manufacturer's specifications and company policy to allow sufficient time for proper engine warm-up and cool-down. The cost justification for equipping the air cargo carrier's entire fleet with TimeTrac was easy for the carrier to calculate — the cost avoidance of not having to prematurely perform an overhaul on another engine was equivalent to equipping the entire fleet with TimeTrac.

Using TimeTrac, another Part 135 operator was able to identify inconsistencies in flight times for a particular route — for some unexplained reason, one particular pilot recorded slightly longer flight times to the same destination. Upon examination of the records and further investigation, it was determined that he was giving local rides to some college friends at this stop. With documentation from TimeTrac, the flight supervisor was able to confront the pilot and eliminate any future unauthorized flights, shielding the carrier from liability risks and reducing expenses.

Flight Schools

Problem:

Accurately tracking aircraft usage and student flight hours is a priority for flight schools of all sizes. Because most flight schools rely on instructors and students for reporting, there is the potential for human error/inaccuracies, misinterpretations or misrepresentation such as:

- Mistakenly transposing flight times
- Inaccurate reporting of hour meter readings
- Unreadable handwriting
- Dishonesty

Solution:

A one-time expense, TimeTrac helps flight schools improve the efficiency of its students and instructors by eliminating a time-intensive and often rushed and inaccurate flight recordings requirement. Instead of having the instructor or student jot down or memorize tach/hour meter values. In addition to improving record keeping, streamlining the reporting process, TimeTrac can be used to monitor student flight records and minimize flight school risk and liability.

Real World Example:

Located in close proximity to several airports, a flight school in Florida had designated several local airports for training purposes and identified one specific airport as “off limits” during certain hours due to the noise sensitivity of the surrounding community. Upon examining the TimeTrac Flight Legs Report for one of its aircraft, it was revealed that a student was making flights to and from this airport. With documentation from TimeTrac, the flight school was able to identify the student and eliminate any future unauthorized flights to the airport.

Another flight school uses TimeTrac to streamline its accounting activities. Through TimeTrac, the school has “real data” that can be used for record keeping and accurate billing and credits. The solution helps to minimize risk of going over required component time and exposing itself to FAA fines. Additionally, the flight school used TimeTrac to help maintain student flight hours and verify student’s flight destinations and required stops during cross-country flights.

Individual Aircraft Owners

Problem:

For the individual aircraft owner, equipment maintenance and overhauls are frequently determined by tachometer or “block-to-block” time rather than “time-in-service”, which translates into lost money. In order to realize considerable savings, aircraft owners, just like Part 135 operators, can save money by tracking aircraft “time-in-service” usage as opposed to “block-to-block” readings.

When it comes to insurance policy issuance, some insurance carriers ask aircraft owners to provide a breakdown of major component times. For many, satisfying insurance requests can be time-consuming, laborious and cumbersome.

Solution:

For the private aircraft owner, TimeTrac’s reporting capabilities simplify and reduce the amount of time needed to accurately fill out insurance applications and manage overall maintenance needs. In practice, few private aircraft owners actually track the component times on their aircraft — they do it randomly, ignore it or leave it up to maintenance personnel to do it for them. When it comes to annual or routine maintenance, TimeTrac will reduce the number of hours the aircraft owner or a maintenance technician spends reviewing aircraft log books and computing times.

TimeTrac gives individual aircraft owners the information necessary to perform real-time monitoring themselves.... just like the airlines and large corporate fleets. Designed with aircraft maintenance in mind, TimeTrac can track component times against manufacturers suggested maintenance times and quickly generate a wide variety of reports. With costs increasing on aircraft operation, the investment in TimeTrac can be quickly offset by the savings in maintenance and manpower.

Real World Example:

Joe, a general aviation enthusiast, flies his twin-engine Cessna 310 an average of 200 hours a year — for business and pleasure. His home airport is outside a major metropolitan area that can become congested. As a result, Joe spends a good deal of time on the tarmac waiting for take off clearance. Recognizing the potential savings in engine hours, Joe sought a way to track “time in service” rather than his “block to block” time. By using TimeTrac, Joe has captured 337 hours (almost 20 percent) on his engine that normally would have been lost. With his engines requiring overhaul every 1,700 hours, the savings made a dramatic impact on his expenses — approximately \$14,000 towards the overhaul cost of both engines.

Corporate Flight Departments

Problem:

Corporate flight departments that run smaller fleets or small to medium sized aircraft often use the old-fashioned “grease board” method to track the status of their fleet. Because of limited budgets, the grease board method has been the defacto standard for many operators. Because of its design, this tradition method of tracking aircraft data, many corporate flight departments must make frequent board updates which leave them vulnerable to transposition errors. Additionally, this type of data tracking does not lend itself to in-depth analysis and historical trending.

Solution:

By replacing the “grease board” with TimeTrac, operators can take maintenance records and more, to a new level. Using the system, operator can significantly minimizes the chance of errors and quickly gain access to a large amount of data which will help to improve decision making and department expense management.

An alternative to the large number of mid-priced and high-end online maintenance tracking programs available today, TimeTrac is a one-time expense. An extremely cost effective solution when amortized over the life of the aircraft, TimeTrac does not require an annual fee and enables operators maintain ownership of their records.

Real World Example:

Barry oversees the maintenance on a corporate fleet of four aircraft — two single-engine aircraft and two light twins. After keeping track of their planes for years using the grease board method, Barry was confident in the accuracy of his record keeping. That was until his company conducted an unscheduled audit of the fleet and Barry had to spend several days combing through logbooks in order to compile the data required. Mired down with meeting the deadline Barry was unable to complete scheduled maintenance work on his aircrafts. When it was all over, it was clear to Barry that the grease board method was not an acceptable method of record keeping. With a limited budget, Barry initially thought it would be impossible to find a system that would address his needs. Then he heard about TimeTrac. With TimeTrac, Barry found that he could not only more effectively manage aircraft maintenance, he could also track warranties and provide the company’s finance department with detailed reports on anticipated expenses and maintenance savings.