

Statement of Ronald Ridenour

1. I submit this Statement in support of the letter from the Soaring Society of America of December 22, 2025 (the “SSA Comment Letter”). That letter provides comments on a proposed Piper PA-25 Airworthiness Directive identified as follows (the “Proposed AD”):

Docket No. FAA–2025–3990; Project Identifier MCAI–2025–00097–A
Document Citation: 90 FR 51610
Document Number: 2025-200-84
Publication Date: 11/18/2025
RIN 2120–AA64

2. I am a graduate of Purdue University, where I was awarded a degree in aeronautical and astronautical engineer. Since 1978 I have been a licensed Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic, No. 1985138 with Inspection Authorization. I also hold pilot ratings in airplanes and gliders, including flight instructor (airplane and glider), and ATP. I also hold type ratings for several Boeing transport aircraft, and other turbine powered aircraft. I served as a pilot and line check airman for United Airlines prior to retiring in 2017. Since 1975 I have served as a Designated Pilot Examiner for the FAA for ratings for airplanes and gliders. For 18 years I owned and operated a glider flight school in the Chicago area.

3. I have for many years regularly perform maintenance and repair work on airplanes and gliders, including the Piper Pawnee PA-25 that has been owned by the Chicago Glider since 1991. I have done so for 47 years. I also sometime serve as a tow pilot, flying the Piper Pawnee in glider tow operations at the Chicago Glider Club, which is located in Minooka, Illinois. I am currently the President of the Chicago Glider Club.

4. Among other maintenance and repair work on the PA-25, in 2021 I assisted Donald Kroesch in replacing the ceconite fabric on the wing covers on the Chicago Glider Club’s PA-25,

and did the pre-recover inspection of the wings before the new fabric was installed. I am very familiar with the structure of the Piper PA-25 Pawnee wing, and other areas of the aircraft.

5. As an A&P with inspection authorization, I have done hundreds of annual and 100-hour inspections on airplanes and gliders. I am well acquainted with the risk of corrosion in aircraft. I review for corrosion as part of such inspections that I conduct. I know what corrosion looks like and have found it on occasion in aircraft that I have inspected.

6. I have reviewed the photos of three South American PA-25 crashes included in the SSA Comment Letter as Figures 1-3. Each shows visible evidence of corrosion that should have resulted in grounding the aircraft and repairing or replacing corroded components. Figure 1 shows visible corrosion in discoloration located on the interior to the spar flange. Figure 2 shows visible corrosion on the left portion of the spar, which is brown in color and obviously corroded. Figure 3 shows visible corrosion as evidenced by the brown color of the metal.

7. I have read the SSA Comment Letter and agree with in its comments concerning the difficulties and expenses that would result from implementing the Proposed AD. I have also read Donald Kroesch's Statement in support of the SSA Comment Letter. I agree with his description of the difficulties, costs and risks of damage to the wing spar from implementation of the Proposed AD.

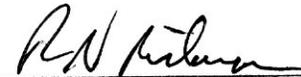
8. I believe the hourly labor estimates for implementing the Proposed AD as contained in the SSA Comment letter are fair and reasonable.

9. I am acquainted with hourly labor rates for aircraft technician in the Chicago area. They range from \$120 to \$245 per hour.

10. I also agree with the SSA Comment Letter that the use of a 3 mm borescope to inspect the front spar and its connection to the leading-edge sheet metal is a far better, less

destructive method of inspection of Piper Pawnee wings than the eddy current inspection method proposed by the Proposed AD. The photographs taken by such a borescope and copied as Figures 7 and 8 in the SSA Comment Letter provide sufficient detail to detect corrosion, cracks or other abnormalities in the Pawnee wing spar.

11. All of the conclusions in this Statement are true to the best of my knowledge and belief, based on my experience as described above.



Ronald Ridenour

Dated: December 21, 2025