

Continuing Airworthiness Notice – 28-008



Piper Aircraft fitted with a Gascolator

2 September 2011

Issued by the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand in the interests of aviation safety. A Continuing Airworthiness Notice (CAN) is intended to alert, educate, and make recommendations to the aviation community. A CAN contains non-regulatory information and guidance that does not meet the criteria for an Airworthiness Directive (AD). The inspections and practices described in this CAN must still be carried out in accordance with the applicable NZCAR Parts 21, 43 and 91.

The contents of this notice are ADVISORY ONLY and are NOT MANDATORY.

CAN numbering is by ATA Chapter followed by a sequential number for the next CAN in that ATA Chapter.

Applicability:

All Piper aircraft models fitted with a gascolator (also called a fuel strainer or fuel filter) to separate contaminants from the fuel system.

Purpose:

This Continuing Airworthiness Notice (CAN) is prompted by a recent engine power loss incident on a Piper PA-28-161 aircraft. The loss of engine power occurred shortly after takeoff which resulted in an emergency landing and significant aircraft damage. Fortunately there were no injuries.

Investigation revealed the pilot inadvertently left the gascolator drain valve open after taking a fuel sample during the pre-flight inspection. Further investigation revealed a locking drain valve Piper P/N 492-022 was fitted to the gascolator.

Background:

The CAA is aware that other Piper aircraft models may also be fitted with a gascolator locking drain valve P/N 492-022.

A review of the applicable Piper Parts Catalogues revealed that the non-locking drain valve P/N 492-312 (CCA 36150) is the part specified by the manufacturer. Piper Aircraft advised the original design specified by Piper Engineering deemed the locking gascolator drain valve P/N 492-022 to be adequate at the time. To provide a higher level of safety Piper Aircraft now specifies and provides the non-locking drain valve as a replacement part for installation on gascolators.

Recommendation:

The CAA recommends operators/maintainers of all Piper aircraft models fitted with a gascolator inspect the aircraft at the next maintenance inspection or next 100 hour inspection whichever occurs sooner, and determine the type of fuel drain valve installed on the gascolator.

If a locking fuel drain valve is found fitted to the gascolator, replace with a Piper valve P/N 492-312 (CAA 36150) or an equivalent manufacturer approved non-locking valve before further flight. If a non-locking fuel drain valve is found fitted, no further action is required.

For information about gascolator maintenance requirements refer to Piper SL No. 1141 date 27 April 2011, Piper SB 1037 dated 28 October 1999 and the applicable Piper Aircraft Maintenance/Service Manual.

Airworthiness Directive DCA/PA28/192 pertains to the subject of this CAN for affected PA-28 series aircraft, and AD DCA/PA38/26 pertains to the subject of this CAN for PA-38 aircraft (NZ Occurrences 10/743 and 11/254 refer).

Enquiries:

All other enquires regarding this CAN should be made to:

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