



Aero Commander's Model 1211 Jet Commander completes two months of in-flight testing

Jet Commander Orders Reach 26

When the *Jet Commander* set down from its initial test flight some two months ago, Aero Commander officials had ample reason for their enthusiasm.

The new pure-jet corporate aircraft had completed its first flight tests with on-the-button "as predicted" performance, without a hitch or a "bug."

Its impact on the corporate aviation industry was immediate: Aero Commander has 26 contract orders for the new jet as of March 20, just seven weeks after its initial flight. Considering the *Jet Commander* is a \$475,000 airplane, this is somewhere in the neighborhood of terrific.

The *Jet Commander*, which has a cruising speed of over 500 m.p.h., is the first pure—as opposed to converted military—U.S. jet designed expressly for use by corporate management. Around Aero Commander, top officials attribute this "singleness of purpose" with *Jet Commander's* success. As Thomas J. Harris, Aero Commander's Vice President and General Manager, put it, the *Jet Commander* "demonstrates that Aero Commander has succeeded in developing the concept of a practical and economical corporate jet aircraft . . . which will operate in and out of small fields now in use by business aircraft owners. This achievement has resulted from a singleness of purpose, in design and development, and to meet the requirements of the business aircraft operator. . . ."

The four-to-six-passenger executive jet transport has a range calculated in excess of 1,900 statute miles, plus a 45-minute fuel reserve. At a maximum gross weight of 14,000 pounds, the *Jet Commander*, or Model 1121 as it is more prosaically called, has a cruising speed at 35,000 feet of 503 m.p.h. It is powered by two General Electric CJ610-1 turbojet engines, each of which provides sea-level thrust of 2,850 pounds. The lightweight (355 pounds) CJ610-1 is a commercial version of the military J85 engine now in large-scale production for the Air Force T-38 trainer and GAM-72 decoy missile.

The twin turbojet's empty weight, including equipment, is 6,800 pounds. Its wings span 43.31 feet; over-all

length is 48 feet, with an over-all height of 15.80 feet. Inside, the cabin is 59 inches high, 57 inches wide. The design speeds at gross weight, according to a company fact sheet on the Model 1121 jet, are: stall speed, clean, 112 m.p.h.; stall speed, landing configuration, 96 m.p.h.; maneuver, 234 m.p.h.

Twenty hours of various flight tests in the *Jet Commander* prototype bore out the engineering and performance statistics which Aero Commander had projected some two years before the new jet's initial flight. Designer Ted R. Smith, Aero Commander vice president, engineering division, said, "Based on our preliminary studies of the aircraft's characteristics, our performance projections for the *Jet Commander* appear to be quite conservative."

The *Jet Commander's* basic retail price of \$475,000 will include a standard four-place executive interior, lavatory, buffet, and crew compartment with basic dual-flight instrumentation.

Prototype Number One of the new corporate jet has logged some 20 hours since its first flight test on January 27. It is presently being reinstrumented and will be flown for further testing to Mohave, Calif., around the first part of April. Prototype No. 2, which is expected to fly in late April, and Prototype No. 3 will be used for static and pressurization tests and for certification of fuel, electrical and radio systems. Aero Commander will keep Prototype Number Four of the *Jet Commander* as a company demonstrator at its Bethany, Okla., offices. Prototype Number Five will be the first *Jet Commander* produced for customer delivery, which is scheduled for the latter part of this year. Full-scale consumer production is expected to be underway by 1964.

The *Jet Commander* is in the "engineering substantiation phase" of its FAA type certification, according to FAA.

By the time the first delivery is made on the new jet, Aero Commander will have invested about \$13,000,000 in the research, design and development of its "single-purpose" corporate jet. From initial performance returns, the *Jet Commander* appears to have been a sound investment. ●