



The New Kid On The Beat

Gippsland Aeronautics

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The latest in a family of utility aircraft designed to be economical and reliable, the GA8 Airvan ASTRA from Gippsland Aeronautics is a high-quality, low-cost alternative to sophisticated fixed-wing and helicopter platforms.

Gippsland is a regional area of the State of Victoria in Australia and the home of Gippsland Aeronautics, a specialist aircraft design, manufacturing and development company that formed in the early 1970s.

Early projects at Gippsland Aeronautics centered on the incorporation of numerous modifications in two areas: specialist modifications for the National Safety Council and Australian Government Aircraft Factory, and the incorporation of safety and load carrying capability for agricultural aircraft in what was then a booming industry. These modifications led to the ultimate development, certification and manufacture of the highly efficient GA200 agricultural aircraft that proved successful in Australia and were exported to the U.S. and several other countries. The simplicity of design and the load carrying capacity of the GA200 led to the concept of the GA8 Airvan, an eight-seat single-engine aircraft that has proven to be the most efficient and economical aircraft of its class in the world.

Many Airvans are now operating around the world, where their high certification and safety standards, as well as low operating and maintenance costs, have endeared them to commercial passenger and freight operators in 32 countries from the arctic to the tropics and everywhere in between.

A USER YOU KNOW

The almost immediate success of the Airvan as a utility aircraft caught the attention of the U.S. Air Force Civil Air Patrol (CAP), which was looking for an airframe to support the 'Archer' Hyperspectral imaging system. After a thorough operational test and evaluation process, CAP acquired 16 Airvans for this purpose. In service, they have proven to be extremely capable, reliable and cost effective.

One reason CAP considered the acquisition of the Australian-built aircraft was that these aircraft are constructed using American-made components and materials, engines, propellers, instrumentation, avionics, fasteners, wheels, brakes and tires and are even finished in U.S. paint

and sealant products. In fact, by weight, the Airvan is over 98 percent U.S. products. The consequence of this fact is that the continuing support of the aircraft is just as simple (more so in some cases) than U.S.-built aircraft.

CAP Airvans were some of the first aircraft in the New Orleans area in the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita and provided vital data to enable effective relief operations.

Other reasons Airvan was the most suitable platform were its huge cabin volume, load carrying capacity and its excellent low speed performance and flight handling characteristics. These features have become apparent to other agencies, and Gippsland Aeronautics now produces and supplies special task equipment to enable the Airvan for surveillance and observation roles.

OTHER FEATURES

A retractable mounting mechanism for an imaging gimbal of up to 15 inches in diameter can be mounted in a conformal