

Ed Mashman

C-182, TAS600 – based at Santa Monica Airport



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Airframe
Cessna 182

Pilot Name
Ed Mashman

Avidyne Solution
TAS600

Location
California

Ed Mashman flies a Cessna 182 he bought in 1980. Over the years, he has upgraded the aircraft with a 300 HP Texas Skyways engine, a new interior, and an Avidyne TAS600 Traffic Advisory System. He flies his 182 about 150 to 175 hours per year.

“I fly mostly in the Los Angeles and Southern California areas, but I also fly every year at least one or two trips to Texas or even the east coast.” Mashman has flown his Cessna across the US and as far north as Halifax, down to Florida, and everywhere in between.

Mashman considers his TAS600 traffic awareness system as the best solution to the limited visibility inherent to high-wing aircraft.

“If you fly a Cessna or other high wing airplane, you’re totally blind from behind and from above and to the right and you really are dependant on getting traffic advisories. And there’s nothing nicer than having a TAS600 on board after being told they’re too busy with IFR traffic and you’re VFR. It gives you a good feeling because you know there are a lot of airplanes out there when they tell you that; it’s the time you might really need advisories.

One particular close call while on approach to Santa Monica Airport spurs Mashman to look into the Avidyne TAS600.

“I began looking at collision avoidance systems because, on one particular approach to Santa Monica, and it was even IFR, this Bonanza comes zooming across in front of me from the

right and above. There’s no way I could have seen him. He was maybe a football field away, so I didn’t report it as a miss, but that’s when I decided that buying a collision avoidance system was a worthwhile idea. Initially I was looking at a TIS system that just gets Class B broadcasts, but then I decided since I fly so much real cross country it would be nice to have one that worked in the enroute system, and that’s how I decided on getting an active-surveillance traffic system, like the TAS600. The enroute capability when you’re going on a long flight is just phenomenally good.”

Mashman decides to go with Avidyne

“The TAS600 gives you real-time awareness, even when you’re flying IFR. I had an incident when I was flying back from Texas where an airplane was descending behind me, and I saw him well before center told me about him. The TAS600 gives you another tool in the toolbox to watch other airplanes. And especially flying in an area like Southern California, it’s really a useful tool.”

The decision process

One of Mashman’s requirements was that the traffic device had to interface with the Garmin 530 in his panel.

“In deciding to get the TAS600, the first thing was it had to be a device that would interface with the Garmin 530. I didn’t want another display device, and the TAS600 met that criteria.”

Ed Mashman

Continued

But Mashman needed more.

"The reason for going with the TAS600 was it was the best system out there that would give you the data enroute or flying into an uncontrolled airport. It really is kind of neat to know if somebody's in the pattern when you get to an uncontrolled field. Pilots are supposed to announce themselves on unicom but they don't always do that".

The purchase process – due diligence, a knowledgeable sales rep and informed avionics techs equal smooth sailing.

"Before I bought the device I talked to the salesperson at Avidyne. I actually had a number of conversations with him, often asking questions, finding out how the unit really worked, what my expectations would be, and how the interface would be with the Garmin. He always had the answers. Indeed, I found the people I spoke to at Avidyne very knowledgeable, and they addressed all my issues and concerns. My experience dealing with Avidyne has been very positive."

It was during Mashman's conversations with the Avidyne rep that he learned about an important feature of the TAS600 that further reduces pilot workload and increases operational efficiency.

"I learned about the airspeed switch (Ground Mode/Weight-on-Wheels input) while talking to the Avidyne sales rep. He suggested that I have the switch installed so that the TAS600 would cycle from ground mode to enroute mode and then back to ground mode after landing. If I hadn't talked to the rep beforehand, I wouldn't have even known there was a switch that did this automatically. That's the only way to do it."

The TAS600 took about three days to install in Mashman's Cessna 182, and once it was done, "it worked like a charm."

As with other Avidyne products, the TAS600 is easy to use, and for the IFR pilot, it provides a better, more concrete and comprehensive picture of traffic in the area.

"The TAS600 doesn't really add workload in the cockpit at all. It does everything by itself, which is important. You don't want a tool that's going to cause you more workload; you want something to lessen the workload. The big thing, in IFR, where you think somebody's giving you all the traffic, you actually get a much better picture of where the traffic is than the guy telling you it's at two o'clock. Usually you're aware of the traffic long before center or approach control gives it to you... It's a nice device."

Big sky, lots of planes...

"It's amazing to know how many planes are up there that you wouldn't be aware of without the TAS600. The busy airspace of southern California is a place where you really want a traffic advisory system. It's almost scary sometimes when you first start using it to know how many airplanes there are out there."

...important piece of mind for pilots and passengers

"Other pilots that fly with me are as amazed as I was at how many airplanes there are up there. And they're pretty amazed at the ease of use of the TAS600. I've just been very happy with the product and the company."