

Piper PA-20 Pacer Model Guide

The Piper PA-20 Pacer is a four-seat, single-engine piston aircraft built from 1950 to 1954. The variants in the family data are the PA-20, PA-20-115 and PA-20-135. The fuselage is fabric-covered. Family-wide figures reach up to 109 kt cruise and 470 nm range. The documents focus on fuel system care, fabric attachment and airworthiness directives.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Four seats, built 1950 to 1954. Variants: PA-20, PA-20-115 and PA-20-135. Piper bulletins cover serial numbers 20-1 through 20-1121.
- Fuel selector valve: Piper SB 354B calls for an ease-of-rotation check every 100 hours and a full inspection every 400 hours or annually.
- Fabric fuselage: Service Letter 362B kit removes the repeat windshield-area inspections of FAA AD 61-6-6.
- Check the logs against the NZ CAA AD schedule, including wing lift struts and forks, tail brace wires, mufflers and the rudder post.

FUEL SYSTEM CHECKS

Piper SB 354B applies to Pacers 20-1 to 20-1121 with the metal plug fuel selector valve. The tapered plug can bind from lost lubricant, debris or hardened grease. The inspection covers wear, scoring, and cracks in the valve ports. Replacement kit 764 295 is listed. Check logbook entries for it.

AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES TO VERIFY

The NZ CAA schedule for the PA-20 lists FAA-origin ADs covering the oil radiator hose, battery box, fuel and hydraulic lines, fire prevention rework, tail brace wires, fuel selector valve, exhaust mufflers, fuel line failure, fabric reinforcement, fuel venting, inlet air filters, fuel tank, and wing lift struts and forks. A rudder post inspection (2025-02-11) is newly added. Confirm current status with the FAA.

ENGINE, FILTERS AND FABRIC

Piper VSP-119 distributes Lycoming SB 480C on oil and filter change, screen cleaning and filter/screen content inspection. It lists the PA-20 Pacer as affected. Service Bulletin 1041 covers inspection and cleaning of Airborne air filter elements to protect the gyro vacuum system. Service Letter 362B reinforces the fabric attachment under the windshield top.

PERFORMANCE

Family Max Cruise Speed Kt	109
Family Max Range Nm	470
Family Max Service Ceiling Ft	16500

SAFETY NOTES

- NZ CAA report on a PA-20-135: the aircraft stalled in a low-level turn in a valley with too little space. The passenger died.
- AAIB report on G-BFMR: the engine stopped at about 50 feet after a prolonged left sideslip. The pilot suspected the left tank collector had uncovered.
- The pilot in the G-BFMR report noted the PA-20 has no header tank between the fuel tanks and the engine. Manage tank selection carefully.