

Cessna 336 Skymaster Model Guide

The Cessna 336 Skymaster is a twin-engine piston, high-wing aircraft built 1963-1964, seating 4 to 6. It has fixed tricycle landing gear and two Continental IO-360-A engines, one pulling at the front of the fuselage and one pushing at the rear. Registry figures for the 336 family are up to 150 kt cruise and a 19,000 ft ceiling.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The key check is front wing spar fatigue cracking: Service Letter ME72-26 and FAA AD 73-4-2 cover high-time Skymasters.
- Inspect at 3000 hours, then every 300, if flown below 1500 ft AGL or history is unknown. Otherwise inspect at 5000 hours, then every 500.
- It is a push-pull twin: one Continental IO-360-A in front, one in the rear, with fixed tricycle gear. A six-seat cabin exists.
- Get airframe and engine hours and the logbooks. One AAIB-reported 1963 example had 1,990 hours at its 1994 airworthiness renewal.

FRONT WING SPAR FATIGUE

Service Letter ME72-26 (December 12, 1972) followed fatigue cracks found in a bolt hole in the lower front spar cap at the strut attach point. Both aircraft were pipeline patrollers with over 4000 hours. Eddy current is used because X-ray did not always reveal small cracks. If a crack is found, both lower spar caps must be replaced before further flight.

INSPECTION INTERVALS TO VERIFY

Models 336 and 337 flown mostly below 1500 feet AGL, or with unknown history, need inspection at 3000 hours and each 300 hours after. Those flown above 1500 feet AGL need it at 5000 hours and each 500 hours after. AD 73-4-2 requires 5000 hours and 500-hour repeats. The Pressurized Skymaster is not due until 10,000 hours. Ask for proof of compliance.

LAYOUT AND HISTORY EXAMPLE

AAIB describes the 336 as a twin-engine, high-wing aluminium aircraft with fixed tricycle gear and variable-pitch propellers. Its example, G-ASKS (1963), was restored in 1988 at 1,814 hours. AAIB found no evidence of pre-accident failure or malfunction. That aircraft struck a hillside in level flight in poor weather.

SAFETY NOTES

- A fatigue crack at the lower front spar cap bolt hole led to ME72-26. Low-level work, such as pipeline patrol, brought the 3000-hour inspection.
- If a spar crack is found, the lower spar caps in both wings must be replaced before further operation. Repairs were at the owner's expense.
- In the AAIB case, the aircraft flew into hills hidden by cloud. The investigation found no technical fault.