

# Is Your Aircraft Talking To You? Listen!

If we're doing it right, encountering an airborne mechanical problem should be a rare thing. Engine-monitor data regularly tells us what's going on under the cowling, while other engine gauges also measure the engine's health. Dim lighting or flickering avionics can alert us to electrical system problems. Stiff controls or balky landing gear tell us something might be amiss in the airframe.

With the possible exception of electrical issues, few of these problems crop up overnight—they often come on gradually, providing ample warning. And even electrical system issues can be anticipated; when was the last time your alternator was overhauled, or the regulator adjusted and set to factory specs?

When considering aircraft maintenance, the NTSB suggests:

- Stick to maintenance test flight plan, do not bring passengers;
- Listen to your aircraft and act;
- Allow time for troubleshooting; and
- Practice emergency procedures.

