Cessna’s upgraded midsize offers plenty for pilots and paX

When I pushed the thrust levers forward for takeoff in the newest version of Cessna’s CITATION Sovereign, I only did the big jar burst forward but something the interesting happened at about 75 percent N1 the power lever moved forward on its own and set takeoff power preciXsely, rather than remain耸on Peterson, senior pilot flight operations, to make the fine adjustments takeoff power. Shortly thereafter we reached rotation speed. I pushed the levers forward for takeoff in the Cessna New Sovereign.

This experimental “new” Sovereign is the updated verXon of Cessna’s midsize jet. It’s a big change from its predecessor, but there are many improvements.

The biggest change to the Sovereign is the updated flight deck. The cockpit ergonomics are improved, and it uses essentially the same computer system. The Sovereign is also heavier, and it uses essentially the same interior design.

Cessna didn’t just change the flight deck, it also took the time to redesign the cockpit, adding Garmin’s G5000 flight deck to standard equipXment. The cockpit was also Xnished with a new, cleaner look, but there is a rotary knob for pilots who prefer that format.

The G5000 system consists of two head-up display units, a multifunction display, and a control display unit. The multifunction display (MFD) is front and center in the cockpit. From where the pilots sit, the G5000 is an “in sight” system, and the flight display is part of the navigaXon system.

The G5000 system is Xexible in that it uses common Xts and displays as well as a separate alphanumeric and numeric keypad. The displays can be customized, allowing pilots to set up their own displays. They can also be used to display flight plans, weather, and other information.

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The new winglets add a total of 62.5 pounds to the Xteam. This added weight is the result of the double-club Ipeco seats being heavier than the previous single-club seats.

The new G5000 system replaces the G1000 system, which is still used in many Cessna aircraft. The new system is more Xexible and allows for a more personalized experience.

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The new system also includes a new glass cockpit, which is a safer and more comfortable environment for the pilots.

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limits on the automatic flight control system (AFCS) mode controller, or the autothrottles will follow programmed speeds in the G5000 FMS. It’s easy to tell whether speed is manually set or referencing the FMS; the manual speed shows up as a cyan speed bug on the airspeed indicator, while in FMS mode the speed bug is a magenta triangle. We climbed at 250 knots to 10,000 feet, then 270 knots/ Mach 0.7 to FL430.

Even when off, the autothrottles provide protection, both at high and low speeds. The low limit is 0.6 angle-of-attack, in which case the autothrottles will add power, and the high limit is the 305-knot Mmo, where the power is reduced to prevent overspeed.

Peterson flight plans 2,200 pounds per hour of fuel for the first hour then 1,600 for the second and 1,500 for the third and subsequent hours. The more powerful engines use about the same amount of fuel as the earlier versions, she said.

I hand-flew the Sovereign to FL430, where we leveled off and spent some time testing out features of the G5000 system, such as setting up holding patterns and inputting a crossing restriction. Instead of having to input a location and bearing and distance from that location, the G5000 needs only the distance before or after a waypoint and the altitude restriction. We didn’t encounter any turbulence, but Peterson said the latest version of the autothrottle software helps smooth out bumps with subtle throttle movements.

On descent, we bumped up against the Mmo limit, but the autothrottles kept us from going too fast. And as we descended through 10,000 feet, the system automatically slowed the Sovereign to 250 knots. I hand-flew the ILS to 7,300-foot long Runway 19L. Vref was about 100 knots, although we had dialed in a slightly higher airspeed manually; the software at that point didn’t automatically look up the performance data in the G5000.

At low speeds, the Sovereign is a little lighter on the controls and not quite so trucklike, and we slid down the ILS easily, with my control inputs guided by not only the G5000’s smooth flight director but also by the flight path marker, which I just needed to point at the touchdown point to ensure a proper landing. In retrospect, I would have dialed in a lower speed as I felt we came in a little hot, but I didn’t want to pull the throttles back because I wanted to experience the autothrottles automatically retarding to idle, which they did once we descended below 50 feet. After touchdown, the nose dropped smoothly and I stepped on the powerful anti-skid carbon brakes and engaged the thrust reversers but just at idle power. We still had plenty of runway remaining by the time we stopped.

There is a lot more to the new Sovereign than meets the eye, but it won’t take pilots and passengers long to appreciate all the changes. The Garmin G5000 flight deck, the Clairity cabin management system, the new winglets, more powerful engines and the integrated interior design all combine to elevate the Sovereign into a new class of high-performance, comfortable and capable midsize jets.