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An Open Letter from ICON Aircraft: General Aviation and ICON's Push for Change

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To those following the ICON Aircraft Purchase Agreement discussion:

We hear you—loud and clear. And I promise, we're listening carefully. This week at Sun 'n Fun has been very informative, hearing from both existing ICON customers and members of the aviation community. We are committed to assuring our customers fully understand the decisions we make and the intended benefits for all.

There has been some amount of misinformation and misinterpretation regarding our Purchase Agreement and the motivation behind its terms. As we move forward, know that ICON is fully committed to (1) working hard to build an understanding for the "why" behind our thinking, (2) listening carefully to feedback for additional insights from our customers and (3) doing what is ultimately right for our owners, the industry and the company.

Hopefully after years of watching the ICON team, you've seen us take on our industry's toughest problems and try to creatively solve them with smart people working relentlessly behind the scenes. Loss of aircraft control through stall/spin accidents was the elephant in the room for airplane designs. You saw us address that problem with a truly remarkable Spin-Resistant Airframe. The next elephant in the room is safety-related product liability. We're trying to approach that one as thoughtfully as we did spin resistance.

The ICON Aircraft Purchase Agreement is different from others. It's long. It's complex. It's even uncomfortable for some. However, we've also received great support from owners, enthusiasts and GA influencers who understand that we're trying to accomplish something much bigger than ICON Aircraft. The Purchase Agreement has two fundamental objectives: (1) vigorously promote safety and responsible flying and (2) directly address the GA product-liability crisis. We can't achieve these alone; it will require a true partnership with our customers and the industry.

Over the past 30+ years, GA has experienced one devastating liability blow after another, leaving a trail of shuttered hangar doors and crippled manufacturers scraping to get by instead of being at the forefront of innovation. Things that don't adapt don't survive and the future of our industry is in jeopardy. Every manufacturer is intimately aware of the issue. The problem of safety-related product liability is massive, lurks well below the surface and must be addressed.

ICON's mission is to make flying much more accessible to those who dream about it. We'll keep fighting that good fight and we hope those who want a healthy industry will join us. There are no certain futures, but what is definite is GA can't stay where it is. If we want a different future, one where personal GA is growing and healthy again, together, we need to adapt.

We are committed to an open dialogue with the ICON community and the GA industry at large. We are receiving and processing your feedback. If we need to improve our contract to help safely grow our industry—we will.

We invite you to join our mission.

Sincerely,
Kirk Hawkins and the ICON team