



**PIPER MEMORIAL AIRPORT
353 PROCTOR STREET
LOCK HAVEN PA 17745**

For Immediate Release:

Flight School Beats FAA Safety Mandate by Two Years
For more information, contact Prof. H. Paul Shuch, Chief Flight Instructor
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Lock Haven, PA, 4 April 2017 – The Federal Aviation Administration’s forthcoming upgrades to its air traffic control system, otherwise known as NextGen, officially go into effect on January 1, 2020. AvSport of Lock Haven, the sport aviation training facility on the Piper Memorial Airport, has become one of the first flight schools to add the new safety equipment to its training fleet, two years ahead of an upcoming FAA mandate.

“We saw no reason to wait any longer,” says Prof. H. Paul Shuch, the flight school’s founder and chief instructor, “since the safety advantages of early adoption are already available to our students.” The equipment upgrades just completed allow controllers and other participating aircraft to see AvSport’s trainer aircraft on screen, and AvSport to see nearby traffic, weather, and other safety information in the cockpit, in real time.

Dr. Shuch, whose postgraduate research more than three decades ago focused on General Aviation collision avoidance, has been waiting a long time for regulations to catch up to his vision. “I was one of many researchers who helped to bring this technology into reality,” he states proudly, “although none of us expected it to take so long to become available.” An FAA safety advisor for 35 years, Shuch is the author of “Near Midair Collisions as an Indicator of General Aviation Collision Risk,” a book that proved a blueprint for much of what NextGen now offers.

An FAA certified repairman, Shuch used his engineering skills to perform the required equipment upgrades to his flight school’s Evektor SportStar Max training aircraft, and his half century of piloting experience to conduct the required flight testing. “It was truly amazing to see how well the pieces of the puzzle finally came together,” he commented. “The skilled air traffic controllers at the Allentown Approach Control facility went the extra nautical mile to make sure that all parts of the system were thoroughly tested, and fully operational.”

The Sport Pilot license, in which AvSport specializes, is the newest portal of entry into the world of aviation, allowing prospective pilots to become licensed in half the time, and at half the cost, of the traditional Private Pilot license. Sport Pilots fly solely for pleasure, in fair weather, during daylight hours, in simple, though technically advanced, Light Sport aircraft like the SportStar that Prof. Shuch just finished equipping for NextGen. Piper Memorial Airport is the ancestral home to the legendary Piper Cub, arguably the world’s first sport plane. Modern Light Sport aircraft allow pilots to recapture the bygone fly-for-fun Cub era, with increased reliability and improved safety. Anyone interested in learning more about sport flying is invited to browse the school’s extensive website at <http://AvSport.org>, where a wealth of free training materials awaits. You can also visit the flight school on social media, at <http://facebook.com/sportflying>.

DOWNLOADABLE PHOTO: http://www.avsport.org/photos/acft/ADS-B/test_ft.jpg

CAPTION: This radar ground track shows the route flown by Prof. H. Paul Shuch in the Allentown PA airspace, in achieving NextGen equipment compliance two years ahead of the FAA 2020 mandate. The multiple turns, climbs, descents, and speed changes requested by air traffic controllers ensured that the system could successfully track and communicate with the flight school’s trainer aircraft under all possible flight conditions.