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Installation Procedure: TrickAir Model 2250 Main Landing Gear Skis

Aircraft Make: Piper Aircraft, Inc.

Models: PA-18, PA-18 "105" (Special), PA-18A, PA-18 "125"(Army L-21A),  
PA-18 "135" (Army L21B), PA-18A "135", PA-18 "150", PA-18A "150" and  
PA-19 (Army L-18C)

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Model 2250 Ski Installation Procedure: Piper PA-18, PA 18 "105" (Special), PA-18A, PA-18 "125"(Army L-21A), PA-18 "135" (Army L21B), PA-18A "135", PA-18 "150", PA-18A "150", PA-19 (Army L-18C)

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## **1.0 Scope**

- 1.1 The following installation instructions provide detailed information on the correct installation of the TrickAir Model 2250 main landing gear skis for the listed Piper aircraft models equipped with a shock cord strut suspension for the 8.50-6 wheel and tire assembly.
- 1.2 These installation instructions must be accomplished on a level surface. It is preferable that the surface is concrete or asphalt, and that the surface level is verified prior to beginning this procedure. Proper alignment and ground clearance of the skis is critical for proper performance. These installation instructions must be accomplished as outline for correct ski installation. Deviations to these installation instructions will require additional FAA approval.

## **2.0 Reference Documents**

- 2.1 AC 43.13-2B
- 2.2 AC 43.13-2A
- 2.3 MIL-STD-2219

## **3.0 Equipment**

- 3.1 Level working area - concrete floor or blacktop is recommended.
- 3.2 Carpenters 4' level or smart level
- 3.3 General Hand Tools
- 3.4 Wing Stands and Aircraft Jacks
- 3.5 Torque Wrench
- 3.6 Swaging Tool
- 3.7 Go-No Go Sleeve Gauge
- 3.8 Cable Cutter
- 3.9 Force Scale
- 3.10 Chalk Line
- 3.11 Plumb Line
- 3.13 Grinder
- 3.14 Welder
- 3.15 Plywood Spacer Strips ¾" x 2" x 24" (ground clearance spacer)

## **4.0 Weight and Balance**

- 4.1 Verify the airplane weight and balance is current. If necessary, weigh the Airplane in accordance with the airplane manufactures procedures.

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## 5.0 Tire Check and Alignment

- 5.1 Verify the main wheel tires size is 8.50-6.
- 5.2 Inflate tires to maximum manufacturer's recommended pressure.
- 5.3 Ensure the main gear axles are parallel to the floor by rolling the airplane back and forth, while checking the alignment according to aircraft maintenance manual.

**NOTE: Do not attempt to weld on brackets until the landing gear has been verified to meet the aircraft maintenance specifications for toe-out.**

## 6.0 Axle Preparation

- 6.1 To provide a good surface for welding, remove the paint and/or corrosion from the bottom of the airplane main gear axles, to a distance of at least .25-inch past the intended weld area. This may be accomplished using a sander or fine grit grinder. 3- M Roloc is recommended. Do not sand or grind extensively so as not to damage the landing gear tube structure.

## 7.0 Establish Aircraft Centerline

- 7.1 Straighten the tail wheel so it is centered.
- 7.2 Drop a plumb-bob from each of the front gear leg attach bolts to the floor, use the most forward position of the bolt for your dropping point. Make a mark on the floor for both locations.
- 7.3 Measure half way between the two plumb-bob marks made in step 7.2 and mark this point on the floor as the front centerline point.
- 7.4 Attach a chalk line to the center of the tail wheel at the floor and pull the line through your front centerline point marked on the floor in step 7.3. Pull the chalk line past the propeller and snap a line on the floor. This is your aircraft centerline.
- 7.5 Block the main and tail wheels on each side to secure the aircraft position.

**WARNING: Ensure the aircraft does not move until all instructions through Section 9.0 have been completed.**

## 8.0 Attach Mounting Brackets to the Skis

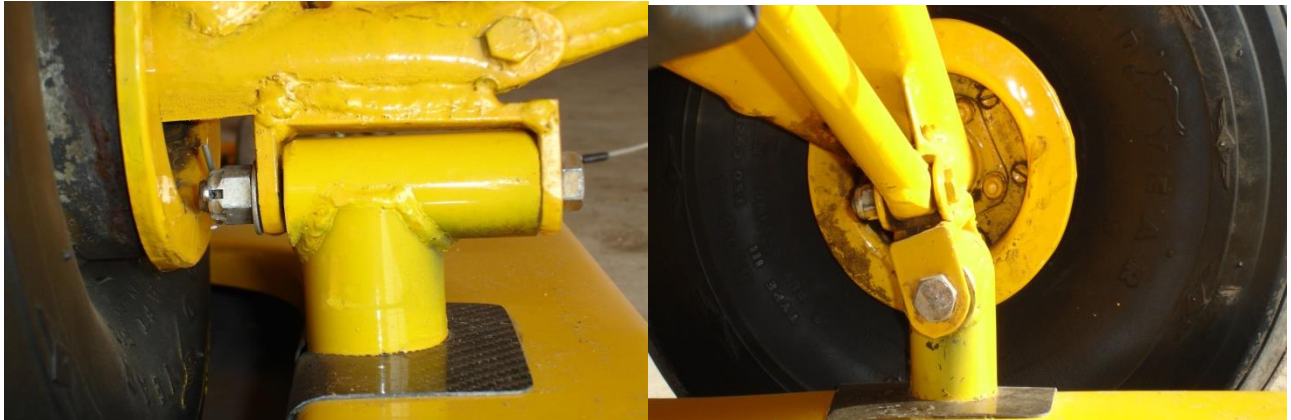
- 8.1 Temporarily attach the ski attachment bracket to the ski using an AN8-42 bolt and AN310-8 nut. It is recommended that you clean the inside of the brackets to remove paint before installation.

**WARNING: The AN8-42 bolt must be installed with the head of the bolt opposite the wheel assembly to prevent interference with the wheel and brake (Figure 1).**

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**Figure 1 - Ski Bracket Bolt Orientation**



## 9.0 Tack Welding Brackets

- 9.1 Move the left main ski with bracket attached into place under the left main wheel axle parallel to the aircraft centerline drawn in step 7.4. Use a straight edge placed against the outside of the tire to determine the placement of the ski relative to the wheel assembly. The outside edge of the ski should be near flush with the outside edge of the tire (Figure 2).

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**Figure 2 - Ski Alignment to Main Wheel**



- 9.2 Place the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 2" x 24" plywood spacer under the ski, located 16 inches back from the front tip of the ski. The ski attachment bracket should touch the axle.

**CAUTION: Do not force the ski/bracket assembly into place. This will cause misalignment.**

- 9.3 Measure from the inside edge of the ski to the centerline on the floor to verify the ski position is parallel to the centerline of the aircraft. The measurements must be taken at the rear of the ski and near the front of the ski (behind the radius) on the flat ski surface near the location of the plywood spacer.

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- 9.4 Using the measurements taken in step 9.3, position the ski so it is parallel to the aircraft centerline (**not** the main wheel). When adjusting the ski position be sure to maintain outside ski edge location relative to the main wheel as established in step 9.1.
- 9.5 Cover the ski and landing gear components to protect them from weld splatter, tack-weld the bracket into place.
- 9.6 Recheck the position of the ski relative to the aircraft centerline.
- 9.7 Remove the ski from the bracket.
- 9.8 Repeat steps 9.1 through 9.7 for the opposite ski.

## **10.0 Finish Weld, Prime and Paint**

- 10.1 The finish weld procedure should be accomplished with the landing gear main wheel removed and the brake assembly secured away from the immediate weld area.
- 10.2 Jack the aircraft in accordance with the aircraft manufacturer's maintenance manual procedures.
- 10.3 Remove the wheel from the axle.
- 10.4 Remove the brake assembly from the axle and secure away from the immediate weld area. Cover the brake assembly and the surrounding axle area to protect from weld splatter.
- 10.5 Insert the furnished spacer tube with a bolt to hold it inside the bracket. This will prevent any distortion of the bracket ears during the welding process.
- 10.6 Finish weld in accordance with MIL-STD-2219 or equivalent for Class B weld. Allow the weld to air-cool, do not quench (Figure 3).
- 10.7 Remove spacer tube and wire brush and clean weld area. When weld is cool inspect with a ten power magnifying glass.
- 10.8 After welding is complete and cooled, clean the welded area.
- 10.9 Coat with epoxy primer and paint as desired.
- 10.10 Reinstall the main landing gear brake and wheel assembly.
- 10.11 Repeat steps 10.2 through 10.10 for the remaining ski attachment bracket.
- 10.12 Remove the aircraft from jacks in accordance with the aircraft manufacturer's maintenance manual procedures.

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**Figure 3 - Ski Attachment Bracket Weld**



## **11.0 Installing Ski to Landing Gear Brackets**

- 11.1 Pre-grease the ski pedestal bushing.
- 11.2 Slide the ski into position under the bracket, and install the AN8-42 bolt, AN960-816 washers and AN310-8 nut, and secure with the cotter pin.
- 11.3 Inspect installation to ensure the ski is properly aligned and free to pivot.

## **12.0 Tang Installation**

- 12.1 On one side of the aircraft and starting with the main gear forward attachment, remove the AN6 bolt and install with the threads facing forward.
- 12.2 Next, slide a three-hole bent tang onto the bolt, ensure proper thread clearance. Install the castle nut and safety with a cotter pin (Figure 4).
- 12.3 Main Gear Aft Attachment: remove the cotter pin, castle nut and washer; ensure the bolt threads are facing aft.
- 12.4 Next, slide a two-hole bent tang onto the bolt, ensure proper thread clearance. Install the castle nut and safety with a cotter pin (Figure 5).
- 12.5 Attach a shock cord to the outboard hole of the forward three-hole tang (Figure 4).
- 12.6 Attach a turnbuckle to the inboard hole of the forward three-hole tang. Install an AN4-6 bolt and AN310-4 castle nut, safety with a cotter pin (Figure 4).



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- 12.6 Attach a turnbuckle to the rear two-hole tang. Install an AN4-6 bolt and AN310-4 castle nut, safety with a cotter pin (Figure 5).

**Figure 4 - Forward Three-Hole Tang Installation**



**Figure 5 - Rear Two-Hole Tang Installation**



- 12.6 Repeat 12.1 through 12.5 on the opposite side of airplane.

### **13.0 Attaching Cables to the Skis**

Rigging of the Main Landing Gear Skis must be accomplished prior to aircraft operation.

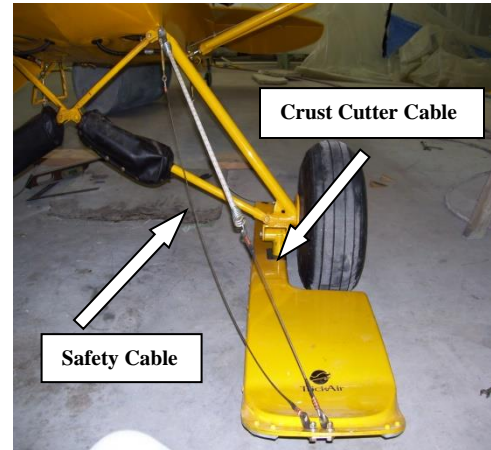
- 13.1 Cables are shipped with two-hole tangs attached to the finished ends. The opposite ends are unfinished and identified by their lengths; Front Safety Cable-6 feet, Rear Limit Cable-5 feet, Crust Cutter-3 feet.
- 13.2 Attach the 5 ft Rear Limit Cable to the AN5 bolt at the rear of the ski (Figure 6).
- 13.3 Attach the 6 ft Safety Cable to the front inside AN5 bolt (Figure 7).
- 13.4 Attach the 3 ft Crust Cutter Cable to the front outside AN5 bolt (Figure 5).
- 13.5 Repeat steps 13.2 through 13.4 on the opposite ski.

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**Figure 6 - Rear Limit Cable**



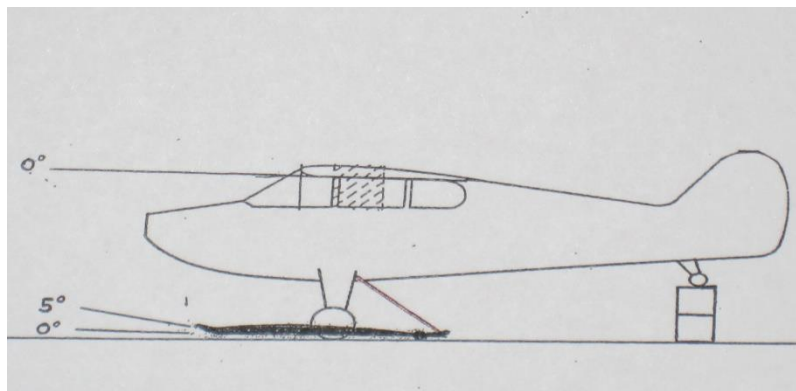
**Figure 7 - Safety and Crust Cutter**



## 14.0 Ski Cable Rigging

- 14.1 Starting with the rear limit cable, you will be required to measure, cut the cables to length and thimble eye splice the tops. FAA acceptable procedures for cable terminations can be found in AC 43.13-1B, Chapter 7, Section 8 *Inspection and Repair of Control Cables and Turnbuckles*.
- 14.2 The rear limit (check) cable shall provide a zero to five (5) degree positive ski incidence angle relative to level flight line of the aircraft as per AC 43.13-2B Chapter 5.
  - 14.2.1 Due to the inward sag of the landing gear, you must raise the aircraft main gear off the ground and raise the tail of the airplane until between zero and 5 degrees in flight positive ski incidence angle is obtained (Figure 8).

**Figure 8 - Rear Limit Cable Ski Incidence Angle**



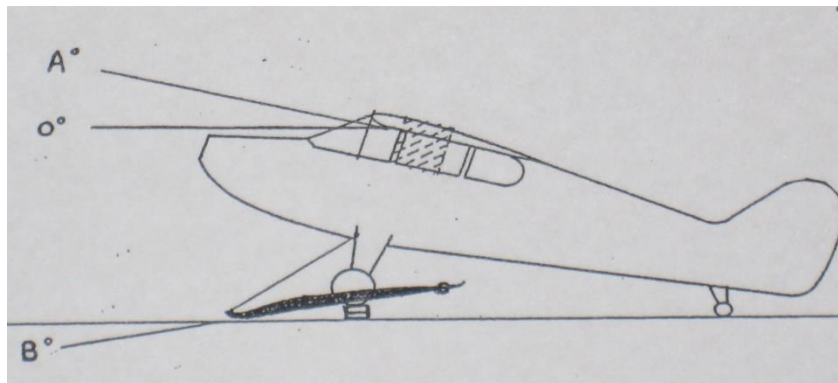
- 14.3 Measure from the bottom eyelet of the rear limit cable to the bottom of the turnbuckle attached to the aft two-hole tang (Figure 5). This is the length of your rear limit cable. Finish the custom cable fit by completing the cable ends in accordance with Section 15 of this installation procedure.

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- 14.4 Next with the aircraft still in level flight position, measure from the bottom eyelet of the crust cutter cable to the bottom of the shock cord attached to the forward three-hole tang (Figure 4). **Note: Turnbuckles are not used on Crust Cutter Cables.** Subtract 1.5 inches from your measurement; this will be your cable length. Finish the custom cable fit by completing the cable ends in accordance with Section 15 of this installation procedure.
- 14.4.1 A tension of between 20 and 40 lbs of force is required to deflect the ski tip down as per AC 43.13-2B Chapter 5. **Verify** that between 20 and 40 lbs of downward force at the ski tip has been achieved without causing excessive toe-in of the skis.
- Note: Excessive shock cord tensions may produce excessive toe-in of skis. Do not over tighten shock cords.**
- 14.5 Now you will measure and rig the Safety Cables. The safety cable is installed to provide a maximum negative incidence of 10 to 15 degrees as per AC 43.13-2B Chapter 5.
- 14.6 With the tail down, jack the aircraft allowing the gear legs to sag into flight position. Place 2x4 blocks under the main gear, then gently lower the aircraft so the main gear just touch the blocks. The aircraft's weight is still being supported by the jacks and the gear is still in flight position.
- 14.7 Push the front of the ski down until a maximum negative incidence angle of 10 to 15 degrees is obtained (Figure 9). Measure the negative angle of the bottom inside edge of the ski (Figure 9, Angle B). Measure the positive level flight angle from PK screw in upper door frame channel to center punch mark on enclosure door rear hinge (per TCDS No. 1A2) in accordance with the aircraft maintenance manual (Figure 9, Angle A). Use the total difference as your negative incidence.
- 14.8 Measure from the bottom eyelet of the safety cable to the bottom of the turnbuckle attached to the forward two-hole tang (Figure 4), this is the length of your Safety Cable. Finish the custom cable fit by completing the cable ends in accordance with Section 15 of this installation procedure.
- 14.9 Repeat steps 14.1 to 14.8 for the opposite gear leg.

**Figure 9 - Safety Cable Incidence angle**



**NOTE:** If the aircraft is equipped with float fittings, they may be used as cable attachment points. Cable lengths must be adjusted to maintain proper specifications as per section 14.

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## 15.0 Thimble Eye Splice Procedure

15.1 The top of the cables will need to be finished to the lengths measured in section 15. The cable ends will need to be thimble-eye spliced using the wire rope sleeves and thimbles provided.

15.1.1 First slide one heat shrink tube on to the unfinished end of a cable. Next slide one oval wire rope sleeve over the unfinished cable end keeping it positioned in one of the two openings (Figure 10).

15.1.2 Now loop the end of the cable through the turnbuckle and back through the other hole of the wire rope sleeve (Figure 11).

**Figure 10 - Heat shrink & wire rope sleeve**



**Figure 11 - Cable Loop**



15.1.3 Attach a rigid nail or screw to an open work bench area. Place the prefinished cable eye over the nail so that the thimble contacts the nail; make sure the two-hole tang does not interfere with the thimble. Use the nail as a starting point for your tape measure (Figure 12).

**Figure 12 - Cable Measuring Fixture**



15.1.4 Stretch the tape measure out to the desired cable length. Adjust the cable end until the proper length is achieved. The thimble ends should extend into the wire rope sleeve (Figure 13).

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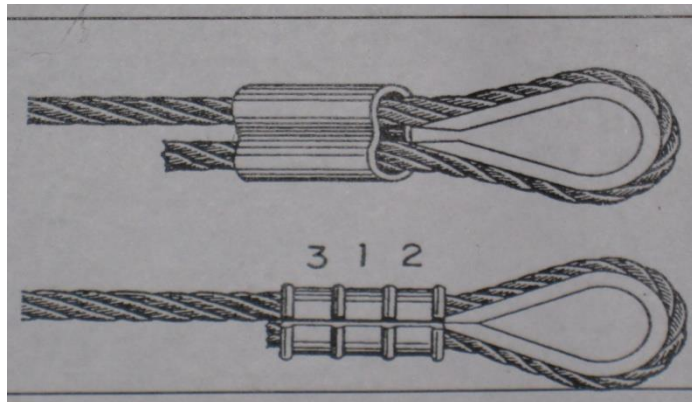
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**Figure 13 - Measuring Cable to Length**



- 15.1.5 Hold the sleeve and thimble together so that the cable does not slip. Lay the wire rope sleeve into the proper notch of the swaging tool for the size of sleeve you are using. *Note: TrickAir uses only "O" oval type sleeves on their cables.* The sleeve should be centered in the jaws of the swaging tool for the first swage.
- 15.1.6 After the first swage has been made move on to the front of the cable for the second and to the rear for the third (Figure 14).

**Figure 14 - Swaging order**



- 15.1.7 Measure cable to verify length. Measure the crimped wire rope sleeve for proper compression using a Go-No Go Sleeve Gauge.
- 15.1.8 Cut off excess cable from the salvage end.  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of cable should extend from the finished crimped wire rope sleeve to allow for full strength of the assembly (Figure 15).

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15.1.9 Tape the loose end of the cable with chafe tape (Figure 16). Slide the heat shrink tube up over the taped area until it is in contact with the Nico sleeve. Heat the tubing to shrink it in place (Figure 17).

**Figure 15 - Cable Finished to Length**



**Figure 16 - Chafe Tape Installation**



**Figure 17 - Finished Cable End**



15.1.10 Repeat steps 15.1.1 through 15.1.9 on the other cables.

15.2 Install the finished cables on the aircraft. Adjust turnbuckles as necessary to obtain the same angle on both skis. Safety wire turnbuckles after adjustments are complete.

## **16.0 Aircraft Weight and Balance, Skis Installed**

16.1 Re-weigh the airplane with the skis attached. Calculate new weight and balance according to aircraft maintenance manual.

## **17.0 Post Installation Paperwork**

17.1 The installation must be accomplished by a properly rated Aircraft Technician.

17.2 Complete FAA Form 337 and a maintenance records entry for this alteration.

17.3 Maintenance must be performed in accordance with the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness.

## **18.0 Post Installation Information**

It is recommended that the pilot read and become familiar with FAA Handbook H-8083-23.

18.1 Taxi

18.1.1 Taxi on pavement or other hard surfaces as normal. Taxi just as you would without the skis attached with the exception of extremely tight turns. Extremely tight turns will cause the tail wheels to scuff and wear prematurely.

18.1.2 Taxi on snow requires slightly more power depending on the snow condition. Turning radius will be greater but you still have the aid of your brakes to assist you in turns and stopping.

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- 18.1.3 If your airplane has been sitting still on snow be sure your skis are not froze in. Usually stepping on them and or giving them a gentle kick will free them in the event they are frozen. Some pilots will carry wooden blocks to place under the skis to prevent them from freezing in place.
- 18.2 Take off procedures
  - 18.2.1 Take off from hard surfaces may be accomplished as you would without skis.
  - 18.2.2 Take off performance from snow will depend on the snow conditions. Refer to the Airplane Flight Manual Supplement for airplane performance information.
- 18.3 Landing
  - 18.3.1 Landing on a hard surface may be accomplished just as you would without skis.
  - 18.3.2 Landing performance on snow will depend on the snow conditions. Refer to the Airplane Flight Manual Supplement for airplane performance information.
- 18.4 Extended Parking
  - 18.4.1 It is a good idea to disconnect the shock cords when not in use. Rubber tends to loose its memory in cold weather. It also is easier to move the airplane around by hand if the shock cords are not attached.