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INTERNATIONAL DAS MAGAZIN DER ZIVILLUFTFAHRT



20 Jahre 9/11

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Quiet featherweight for the jet cockpit

Satisfied reviewer:
AERO INTERNATIONAL
author and professional
pilot Martin Schenke-
meyer

TELEX AIRMAN 8+

With the Airman 8+, US headset manufacturer Telex has made its top model even quieter and more comfortable. AERO INTERNATIONAL author Martin Schenkemeyer had plenty of time to try the headset in the cockpit of a Dassault Falcon 7X during a long-haul flight

For more than 60 years, US manufacturer Telex has been building headsets for the aviation industry. The Airman 8+ is its current top model and promises active noise reduction (ANR) with maximum wearing comfort. As a First Officer on board a Falcon 7X, I had the opportunity to test the headset on a transatlantic flight. The first external impression of the Airman 8+ is convincing. The headband is

made of stainless steel and the workmanship is of high quality. I immediately notice the low weight: the Telex headset weighs only 125 grams. By comparison, Bose's top-of-the-range A20 headset weighs a hefty 340 grams. However, the A20 has larger ear cups that enclose the entire ear - it is primarily intended for smaller aircraft powered by piston engines, where the noise level is particularly high. With the Airman 8+, Telex explicitly ad-

dresses pilots of „commercial and business turbine aircraft“, i.e. mostly turbine-powered and thus quieter aircraft.

The ear cups are correspondingly small. They merely rest on the ears instead of completely enclosing them. In combination with the low weight, this has the advantage that you hardly notice the Telex when you put it on. This feeling is enhanced by the extremely comfortable headband pad, which is avail-



The XLR standard is widely used in commercial flying. But the Airman 8+ is also available with dual plugs

The new top model from Telex weighs only 125 grams. The headband pad is available in two sizes

“The Airman 8+ is the right choice for longer flights in jet and turboprop”

ble in two sizes. Even on long flights, there is no unpleasant feeling of pressure on top of the head. The headset can be worn with the microphone on the right or left without having to be converted. The sunglasses I wear in flight have enough space and fit perfectly under the headset.

Shortly before take-off, I look for a battery compartment. As the owner of a Light-speed Zulu 3 headset, I know what it's like; after all, the active noise reduction has to be supplied with power somehow, right?. Wrong – the Airman 8+ does not need an external power supply and is powered by the on-board power supply via the headset plug. I find this practical – I don't have to carry around spare batteries or rechargeable batteries, and it's good for the environment, too.

The headset's power supply is sophisticated: With the widely used PJ dual plugs, the Airman 8+ uses the supply voltage of the microphone; the XLR plugs used in commercial aviation provide the voltage additionally via a separate connection pin.

The ANR can be switched on and off with a switch on the left ear cup. At around

180 centimeters, the cable should be long enough for any type of aircraft.

But a headset should not only be light and fit well; above all, you have to be able to communicate with it perfectly. This applies both to communication with colleagues via intercom and with air traffic control. Both work very well with the Telex.

Problem-free HF radio

The active noise reduction lowers ambient noise considerably, although not completely, and you can understand your counterpart and air traffic control loud and clear. Even the usually difficult communication over the Atlantic on HF radio works smoothly.

There is no volume control on the headset. A small toggle switch, which has to be operated with a paper clip or a toothpick because of its size, can be used to switch between two volume levels. Telex points out, however, that the normal volume is usually quite sufficient and that it is not necessary to switch to the „High“ level. I can confirm this, at least on board the Falcon 7X.

Nevertheless, a conventional and stepless volume control via rotary knob would be

pleasant. The Telex also does not offer Bluetooth: pairing with a smartphone or iPad is thus not possible and is not offered as an option.

Nevertheless, pilots who fly jets or quiet turboprops can expect the Airman 8+ to be a flawless headset with good noise reduction and excellent wearing comfort. Telex offers a three-year warranty on its top-of-the-line product, which at the time of our test was on sale in German aviation shops for 578 Euro. This makes it less expensive than other manufacturers' models with active noise reduction. Included in the package are a replacement windscreen for the microphone, hygienic covers for the ear cups, an alternative head pad as well as a space-saving headset bag and an FAA certificate - the Airman 8+ is one of the few headsets that is approved for airline cockpits according to TSO-C139a.

As the Telex Airman 8+ shows, the headset of choice must always fit the intended use. For longer flights in quiet aircraft, the Airman 8+ is definitely a good choice. ●

Martin Schenkemeyer