11/21/2026 **A Citation Owner: Opinion On the topic of Single Pilot Ops**



(Edwin Sahakian's Cessna Citation)

As for single-pilot Citation operations, I have a rather strong opinion based on personal experience. When I first purchased my two-pilot Citation, I was genuinely concerned about the additional expense and hassle of having to lug another pilot around everywhere.

What I discovered, however, is that it's neither particularly expensive nor inconvenient. In fact, quite the opposite. The cost of a qualified second pilot, particularly in light jets, is surprisingly reasonable, while the increase in safety and convenience is enormous.

Just imagine having another experienced pilot alongside you to discuss everything from routine flight planning to those all-important go/no-go decisions. Someone who can challenge your judgment when necessary. After all, the autopilot has never once turned to me and said, "Edwin, are you sure that's a good idea?" And frankly, there have been times when somebody should have!

Then there's the convenience. Helping get the airplane out of the hangar, arranging fueling, preflight preparations, handling communications, and simply having good company on a long flight.

And let's not overlook one rather important consideration for those of us gentlemen north of 60: **the bathroom!** My Citation has tremendous range, but unfortunately, my bladder no longer shares the manufacturer's optimism. Having someone qualified to fly the airplane while nature calls is a luxury that's difficult to put a price on. At our age, that's not just convenience, it's flight planning!

But seriously, the benefits are difficult to fully appreciate until you've experienced them firsthand. When I bought the airplane, I viewed the second pilot as an unavoidable expense. Today, even if the FAA allowed me to fly it single-pilot, I would have absolutely no interest in doing so. More importantly, there have been several occasions when having that second pilot aboard has helped me recognize or deal with potentially serious safety issues. I can personally attest that the added safety is not merely theoretical.

I'm certainly not suggesting that single-pilot flying cannot be done safely. But having experienced both, I believe the advantages of two qualified pilots are overwhelming. It's rather ironic that something I initially considered an inconvenience has become one of my favorite aspects of owning a Citation. I've spent a lot of money on aviation over the years, and I can assure you that the second pilot has been among my better investments! - *Edwin Sahakian*

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