



# **ROD HIGHTOWER**

*President/CEO, Experimental Aircraft Association*

*Born: October 23, 1959*

*B.S., Aviation Technology – Central Missouri State University*

*Married: wife, Maura; five children, Hannah, John, Hilary, Heidi, Hayleigh*

*Home: St. Louis, Mo.*



Rod Hightower was named EAA's third president on July 26, 2010, and assumed that role on Sept. 7, 2010. His career spans more than 25 years of business management and senior leadership positions for Fortune 500 manufacturing and industrial companies, and most recently as the CEO of private equity owned portfolio of businesses in the Public Safety and Law Enforcement sectors. He has led both U.S. and international operations with as many as 3,200 employees and annual revenues of \$470 million, and has led the sales organization for divisions as large as \$900 million.

Along with his business expertise, however, Hightower is a passionate aviation enthusiast. A native of Dallas, Texas, he has been an EAA member for more than 20 years, an active pilot for 31 years, and restored his own Stearman biplane that he flies out of Creve Coeur Airport near St. Louis. Hightower is also active as a director of the National Stearman Foundation, a volunteer role focused on fundraising and organizing the annual week-long National Stearman Fly-In. His Stearman involvement expanded in 2009 as Rod is a founding member of Stearman Flight, a F.A.S.T. signatory organization dedicated to Standardized formation training in the Stearman aircraft. During Rod's time in London, his Stearman was based at North Weald and the family enjoyed flying to many aviation events across the UK.

Hightower grew up in modest circumstances, as his father was a welder with the Ford Motor Company. In order to learn to fly and pay his way through college, Rod started a business when he was 15 years old and kept it operating during his college years before selling it in 1984, two years after his graduation from Central Missouri State University.

Hightower joined Square D Company with an initial assignment as an automation specialist. Rising quickly through sales & channel management leadership positions, Rod was promoted to Vice President in 1996, the second youngest VP in Square D's history. After rising to lead sales and marketing across several of Square D's business units, he joined York Corporation as vice president of North American sales and service for its engineered systems group. He later led a turnaround of York's Europe, Middle East and Africa air conditioning business as general manager responsible for a \$470 million global P & L.

After returning to the United States, Hightower became CEO at Public Safety Equipment, a supplier of emergency lighting, radar and video systems used in law enforcement and military applications. He remained in that position until late 2008, and remains an equity owner in that company.

To interview Rod Hightower, contact: Dick Knapinski, EAA Media Relations (920-426-6523 or [dknapinski@eaa.org](mailto:dknapinski@eaa.org))

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