

Maintenance

by Robin Campbell

Apologies for the dry nature of this subject, but the topic is driven by regulatory change when CAA introduced Rule 91.605 on 30 March 2007. Several issues brought about by the new rule now impact on the private aircraft owner.

In the past, owners had three choices when maintaining aircraft — follow a generic maintenance schedule produced by the CAA (Part 43 Appendix C), the manufacturer's schedule or an approved programme. Many operators of light aircraft had adopted the generic CAA model as opposed to the more stringent manufacturer's schedule. After all, the manufacturer's needs had been constructed against the background of a trail of litigious activity. The third option of an approved programme had been used by commercial operators and some maintenance organisations.

The choices now available under the new rule are just two — adhere to the default manufacturer's schedule or arrange an approved programme under sub clause (4) of the rule. That allows a schedule to be approved by the Director under the conditions of rule 91.607.

Sub clause (8) of that rule allows a variation to the manufacturer's recommendations in the light of operating experience and provided no degradation in safety is demonstrated. This is where the DH82A and the Tiger Moth

inspection requirements and membership of AOPA.

The acceptable means of compliance with rule 91.607 (4) is indicated in draft CAA Advisory Circular AC91-YY. I know this sounds complex, but in essence if you operate an aircraft privately you have to either use the manufacturer's schedule for your aircraft type or get your own schedule approved by the CAA (costly). If your application contains less than the manufacturer's recommendations then you must also be able to demonstrate that it will not diminish safety levels.

This rule change does not apply to commercial operators as they already have their own approved maintenance schedules. Can I borrow one of those? I hear you ask.

Not really, as they are approved only for that operator and aircraft combination. You would still need to get them approved and the cost would once again be prohibitive.

The Tiger Moth Club is planning to approach the CAA to gain approval for a Maintenance Schedule that would apply to all Moth variants. It would be based on the DH Moth schedule but with some variations where we can demonstrate safety issues are not compromised.

Some of this is new ground, as the rule is quite specific in its application. We would need approval from the CAA to manage the schedule in much the same manner as AOPA. The schedule would be owned by the club and

The good oil

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Changes to CAA Rule 43 permit owners to carry out limited maintenance tasks on their aircraft. These include fabric repairs, replacement of tyres, tail skids, etc. Included in the list is the replenishment and changing of oil and the cleaning of filters.

The condition and consumption of oil is one of the components you will need to monitor if you wish to extend the life of your engine beyond the normal overhaul period of 1500 hours under the new rules.

To prepare for this, we will be conducting workshops at Taumarunui in October and Taieri in February. John Pheasant will conduct an oil change on a Tiger Moth and Jim Lawson/Glenn Thompson on a Chipmunk. It will also involve the taking of an oil sample for analysis of contaminants by Gough, Gough & Hamer.

Goughs have had many years' experience in oil analysis, firstly in earthmoving equipment and lately in aircraft. Michael Hooper is their Lab. Manager and he will be at both of these events to give a presentation on their Oil Commander programme and what you can expect from these analyses. He will be happy to answer any of your questions. You can get info on their website at <http://www.oillab.co.nz>

We need a Tiger and a Chipmy for these workshops — preferably one approaching the oil change interval. If you are happy to volunteer your aircraft for the workshop we would be very grateful. Drop me an e-mail

(beechbum@orcon.net.nz) and let me know what oil grade and type you use. In return you will get a free oil change and analysis with the compliments of our sponsors. It's a win-win!

We will share the results of the oil analysis with you and that will get you started on your engine escalation programme. On the paperwork side, notes will be produced on oil changes and all attendees will be certified for conducting oil changes under the terms of the Rules.