

BGA Airworthiness and Maintenance Procedure

Owners Airworthiness Responsibilities - UK Part 21 (formerly EASA) Aircraft

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Owner Responsibility.

Owners are responsible for managing the airworthiness of their glider. A bit like a car owner must ensure a car has a MOT, TAX and insurance. Keeping a glider airworthy physically and legally fit for flight takes effort. A first step is to understand the BGA and CAA airworthiness requirements. The BGA AMP (Aircraft Maintenance Procedures) section of the website has lots of advice. The owner of the aircraft shall be responsible for the continuing airworthiness of aircraft and shall ensure that no flight takes place unless all the following requirements are met:

- (1) the aircraft is maintained in an airworthy condition.
- (2) any operational and emergency equipment fitted is correctly installed and serviceable or clearly identified as unserviceable.
- (3) the airworthiness certificate is valid; (the certificate is none expiring but validated with a current ARC)
- (4) the maintenance of the aircraft is performed in accordance with the AMP specified in point M.A.302.

Compliance and Airworthiness.

It is vitally important that an aircraft is following the relevant airworthiness requirements. Having an aircraft that is safe to fly does not mean it is legal to fly. To achieve compliance, it is necessary to be aware of and use the correct data and information including the maintenance programme (BGA SDMP 267), the manufacturers and others airworthiness instructions, which people have authority to certify maintenance, and the inevitable but important paperwork. For instance, several parts on a glider have legally fixed life, eg. Tost release hooks, harnesses, control cables and the airframe itself. It is the owner's responsibility to be aware of these lifed items and ensure they do not exceed them. Documentation is clearly necessary.

There are a several documents you need to be familiar with.

- **Flight Manual and Maintenance Manual.**
These documents contain valuable information and need to be kept up to date with manufacturer's amendments. New amendments are often found on manufacturers websites in the Technical Note or Service Bulletins sections.
- **Maintenance Programme - Part 21 gliders.**
All gliders operated within the BGA airworthiness system use a generic Minimum Inspection Programme (the BGA version is known as the BGA SDMP 267 found on BGA website plus an explanation in the BGA AMP part of the website) that must be customised to your individual aircraft. The customisation must include any type specific maintenance requirements by the owner (a BGA inspector can advise) who then must take responsibility for the Self-Declared Maintenance programme. The BGA SDMP 267 includes an annual inspection that must be certified by a BGA inspector every 12 months. You are advised to carefully read and understand the rules that underpin this.
- **Annual inspections.**
Every 12 months a glider must have an annual inspection. With annual inspections there is also a mandatory requirement for some servicing, parts replacement and lubrication as well. It is not as the name suggest just an 'inspection'. Under old Part M rules the annual inspection could be 'anticipated' by up to 90 days without loss, but under new Part ML rules (from 24th March 2020) the

annual maintenance cannot be anticipated with loss. But is only valid for 12 months from the day the inspector signs the Certificate Release to Service (CRS) on the BGA SDMP 267

- **Annual extension.** The annual maintenance can be extended by up to 30 days by the owner if required. But only if the ARC is still valid for that extended period. Note if there are any Airworthiness Directives (ADs) applicable that are actioned by calendar dates or hours due at the annual maintenance, they cannot be extended.
- **Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC).** An ARC is an audit of all the glider's paperwork for completeness and compliance. It is separate to the annual maintenance. An ARC is not considered to be maintenance but is in fact a check of the glider's compliance with CAA and BGA rules. It includes an inspection of the glider to ensure it has no apparent defects that effect airworthiness and all placards as required by the glider's Flight/maintenance manuals and BGA are fitted. A new ARC is issued every year. A glider must not fly if the ARC is not valid.
- **Certificate of Insurance.**
Don't get caught out. It is a legal requirement to hold an appropriate level of insurance. Your insurance broker can advise.
- **Pilot / Owner Maintenance.**
Pilot/owners are permitted to carry out and certify certain maintenance tasks on their glider – details are in the Airworthiness and Maintenance Procedures on the BGA member's website. Note that a student glider pilot is not deemed to be a qualified pilot and cannot perform Pilot Owner maintenance, in this case they must arrange a BGA inspector to oversee any work they do. It is important that pilot/owners ensure they are competent before carrying out any maintenance task on their glider. They still must use the same worksheets as BGA inspectors. If in doubt, seek qualified BGA guidance
- **BGA Airworthiness Support**
This includes use of BGA inspectors. A BGA issued ARC automatically supplies the aircraft with 12 months BGA airworthiness support. BGA inspectors are not authorised to certify maintenance on the aircraft that do not have a valid BGA issued ARC/valid BGA airworthiness support. Owners of aircraft without a valid BGA issued ARC can apply separately for BGA airworthiness support, which includes cost of the next ARC issue, using the Airworthiness Support Application Form.
- **Inspectors.**
Inspectors can be professional, or volunteers. Owners must establish via a BGA Maintenance work order what work they need before work starts (this is a legal requirement). Most clubs have volunteer inspectors. Word of mouth among owners can usually help owners identify local inspectors who can provide the support sought by an owner. A few professional maintainers advertise in 'Sailplane and Gliding' magazine, some of whom specialise in repairs. It is up to individual owners and inspectors to consider what service is required and to make their own arrangements. As you would expect, the BGA will not get involved in commercial issues between parties.

If you need help to find a BGA inspector, please contact your club in the first instance or the BGA office.

Tel 0116 2892956

Email office@gliding.co.uk