

# Technical Log Troubleshooting

Would you reject an aircraft during preflight inspection if the technical log wasn't up to date? Knowing who's responsible for raising the tech log and how to record maintenance activities will help you keep tabs on your aircraft's airworthiness.

The main function of the CA006 *Technical Log* (we'll call it the tech log) is to give the pilot a preflight snapshot of the aircraft's current maintenance status. To do this, all relevant maintenance, routine or otherwise, must be recorded between inspection intervals.

"Contrary to what a lot of people think, the responsibility of ensuring information on the tech log is accurately recorded and current, lies with the operator, not the maintenance provider," says Rick Ellis, CAA Aviation Examiner – Maintenance Engineering.

This confusion may stem from the fact that even though the maintainer is not responsible for raising the tech log, in real-world practice they generally do so.

The tech log must be carried in the aircraft, and should be used to record maintenance required between scheduled inspections. A release to service may be certified on the tech log, as well as the CAA400 *Maintenance Record Sheet*. All certified maintenance must be summarised in the aircraft logbook – as required by rule 43.69 *Maintenance records*.

## Operator Responsibilities

The operator of an aircraft must ensure tech log information is accurately recorded and current. You shouldn't be taking an aircraft flying with a tech log that hasn't been completed correctly.

To really get to grips with the requirements, make sure you read rule 91.619 *Technical log* and the Advisory Circular AC91-6 *Aircraft technical log*.

Rick Graham, CEO and Chief Pilot of Napier-based Shoreline Helicopters, says his main concern is pilots failing to check the tech log prior to flight.

"On several occasions when I've flown with pilots, I've found the annual review of airworthiness expired (and outside of the latitude period, had it been applied), or the date of the next inspection due has passed."

The annual review of airworthiness may be extended by a latitude period (which is usually 10 per cent, up to a maximum of 36 days) to allow for maintenance planning purposes.

"Sometimes, even when an overdue inspection has been rectified, there's no way to tell by reading the tech log, as the details haven't been recorded.

"Another thing pilots often overlook is maintenance due before the next scheduled inspection, eg, a four-month oil change. Once again, sometimes this has been done, but the details haven't been recorded correctly," says Rick Graham.

## Common Pitfalls

Make sure you have the correct information on the tech log. For example, you need to be sure which maintenance programme the aircraft is being maintained to, as this lets the reader know who is responsible.

Defects that arise must be recorded on the tech log.

The image shows a mock-up of a 'Technical Log' form from the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand. The form is titled 'Technical Log' and 'SECTION 1'. It includes fields for 'Date Raised' (DAY, MONTH, YEAR), 'Sheet Number', 'Registration' (ZK-), 'Aircraft Type and Model', 'Operator Details' (Name, Address, Phone), 'Maintenance Programme' (handwritten: OPERATOR'S MAINTENANCE MANUAL), 'Next Scheduled Inspection Due' (Type: 100 HOURLY), 'Hours' (2550:00, 2560:00), 'Maintenance Due prior to next scheduled inspection', and 'Maintenance required' (handwritten: 100 HR INSPECTION EXTENDED, 1 hr OMM CH 5, 1 hr success). The form also has fields for 'Annual Review of Airworthiness' and 'Next Due'.

This mock-up of a tech log shows one method of recording a maintenance interval extension.

Rick Ellis says, "Some think that they are able to record the defects separately – that's simply not the case.

"Also, before conducting any pilot maintenance, make sure you're sufficiently trained and authorized to do so, and any maintenance you carry out is recorded on the tech log and released to service," says Rick.

"A common error," says Steve Backhurst, CAA Aviation Safety Adviser (Maintenance),"is not correctly completing the ARA/Maintenance Review section.

"You should put a line through one of the two options to record which option is relevant. Ensure that the next scheduled inspection due is recorded correctly.

*"The responsibility of ensuring information on the tech log is accurately recorded and current, lies with the operator, not the maintenance provider."*

"Also make sure you record any maintenance, routine or otherwise, that's required/conducted before the next scheduled inspection.

"If you extend an inspection interval, put that on the log," says Steve.

By recording the adjusted figure after an inspection planning latitude has been applied, it shows that a conscious decision has been made. If the operator intends to record an extension themselves, that should be done in consultation with the maintenance provider. This will ensure that any other outstanding maintenance required during that extension period doesn't get missed.

### Approved Alternatives to the Tech Log

Only a holder of a Part 119 air operator certificate may have their own approved version of the tech log, provided it meets all rule requirements and has been accepted by the Director. See rule 91.619 (c) for more information.

Steve Backhurst says, "I remember a case where an aircraft was being employed by two operators, one under Part 137, and the second, Part 119. In error, an alternative tech log was being used by the Part 137 operator. The tech log that should have been used for this aircraft was a version that had been approved by the Director for the Part 119 operator.

"Alternative versions of a tech log need to be approved," says Steve.

Tech logs are available free of charge from the CAA, email [info@caa.govt.nz](mailto:info@caa.govt.nz). ■

# Will You Own an Aircraft on 1 July?

The Annual Registration Fee and Participation Levy are invoiced on 1 July to the registered aircraft owner on that day.

The registered owner must pay the fee and levy regardless of the state of airworthiness, or a pending sale of the aircraft.

The Civil Aviation Act 1990 defines "owner" as the person lawfully entitled to possession of the aircraft for 28 days or longer. This means if you lease the aircraft for 28 days or longer, you are deemed to be the owner.

If you're selling an aircraft before 1 July, a change of possession form must be received and actioned by the CAA before 1 July 2016, so you should send this in as early as possible to allow time for postage and processing. If the aircraft is still in your name on 1 July, you're liable for the invoice, even if you have sold the aircraft.

Once issued, the invoice can't be transferred to anyone else. Payment is due by 20 July 2016. If it isn't paid, the aircraft may be deregistered but the fee and levy will still be collectable. If the aircraft is deregistered, the Airworthiness Certificate, or Flight Permit, is revoked and the aircraft cannot be legally flown.

If you have any queries about the fee and levy, email: [Aircraft.Registrar@caa.govt.nz](mailto:Aircraft.Registrar@caa.govt.nz). ■

