

A MESSAGE TO AIRCRAFT OWNERS

This is about maintenance. As your aircraft retakes the skies after the COVID-19 grounding, it's crucial to understand your obligations.

If you're an aircraft owner, the onus of your aircraft's airworthiness is on you. Not your engineer.

Yes, only those people referred to in rule 43.51 can perform maintenance and certify a release-to-service after aircraft maintenance carried out in accordance with 43.101. But you're effectively the maintenance controller of your aircraft.

So, apart from a passing familiarity with what's going on under the cowl, you need to follow up with your maintainer any airworthiness directives and other instructions for continuing airworthiness. Don't wait for them to follow up with you – that's not their responsibility.

Make sure your aircraft has its required inspections – for example, operational check flights and duplicate inspections – done correctly, and that it's been properly released to service after maintenance.

Keeping records up-to-date is your responsibility

As the aircraft owner, it's you who's required to keep and maintain your aircraft's maintenance records.

You could arrange or contract for an engineer or maintenance organisation to maintain those records, but it remains your responsibility to see they're completed accurately and on time.

Some documents need to be carried in the aircraft, such as the certificate of airworthiness, and some must not, eg, aircraft logbooks. The requirements will vary for some non-standard category aircraft. See the relevant rules, for instance, Part 106 for hang gliders. For more information on the maintenance responsibilities of an aircraft operator, read rule 91.603 *General maintenance requirements*. Visit aviation.govt.nz > Rules.

Remember that paperwork is king, and the value of your aeroplane is also in its records. So keep them tidy, safe, and up-to-date. It makes good sense because your aircraft, apart from anything else, is your investment.

To read more about your obligations as an aircraft owner, email publications@caa.govt.nz, for a free copy of the Good Aviation Practice booklet, *How to be an aircraft owner*.

Will you own an aircraft on 1 July 2020?

The annual registration fee and participation levy are invoiced on 1 July to the participant who is the registered aircraft owner on that day. The registered owner must pay the fee and levy regardless of the state of the airworthiness, or 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 2020 so you should send this in as early as possible to allow time for processing. If the aircraft is still in your name on 1 July, you're liable for the invoice, even if you've sold the aircraft.

Once the CAA has issued you with the invoice, you can't transfer it to anyone else. Payment is due by 20 July 2020. If it isn't paid, the aircraft may be deregistered but the fee and levy will still be collectable. If the aircraft is deregistered, its 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: aircraftregistrar@caa.govt.nz.

// Other reminders

Please remember to tell us if your details change, especially your email address. Visit: aviation.govt.nz > Contact us > Change of address.

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