

Good maintenance – keeping owners happy

By **George Done**

The AOPA Maintenance Working Group first met in October 2010 with one of the main objectives being to provide a forum for discussion of maintenance issues to the mutual benefit of aircraft owners and maintainers following the initial experience of both parties of EASA Part M. *General Aviation*



for April 2011 carried an article describing the working group's establishment and rationale in some detail. Its Terms of Reference appear on the AOPA website www.aopa.co.uk. The WG also provided a convenient

forum to air maintenance problems encountered by a small number of aircraft owners. These problems were those sufficiently vexatious for the owner to contact AOPA to seek help and in 2009 were running at about 30 per year. These have dropped significantly to more like 10 per year, possibly as a result of fewer hours being flown and possibly because of Part M itself. Considering that the 2 – 3000 aircraft owned or partly owned by AOPA members visit a maintainer for an annual or periodic regular check at least twice a year, the number of problems arising amounts to no more than a fraction of one percent. This clearly indicates a very high degree of owner satisfaction with their maintainer generally.

Nevertheless, the WG members decided it would be a good idea to draft a Code of Practice for Maintenance and Repair that they themselves follow and could be recommended to other light aircraft maintainers, especially in cases where aircraft change hands and the new owner transfers to a new maintainer. These light aircraft maintainer members are listed on the AOPA website. Then, if the new owner has had no previous dealings with the maintainer, the Code of Practice can be used to establish a basis for the maintenance organisation commitment to their customer future business relationship. If a maintainer is happy to indicate to a wider world that he/she has 'signed up' to the Code of Practice, then an email or letter indicating as much should be sent to AOPA* and the organisation name will be added to the list on the AOPA website. Any such request will be independently verified to ensure integrity. The Code of Practice appears to the right.

When EASA Part M made its appearance

on the maintenance scene, introducing new terms such as 'CAMO', several owners contacted AOPA asking for reader-friendly explanations of the essential details, including the differences in maintenance procedures between Annex I and Annex II aircraft. One of the owner members of the WG, Brian Chambers, addressed this problem by producing, after much

discussion, the accompanying flow chart on one page (*right*) that summarises the essential details and it is hoped that many AOPA owner members will find it helpful.

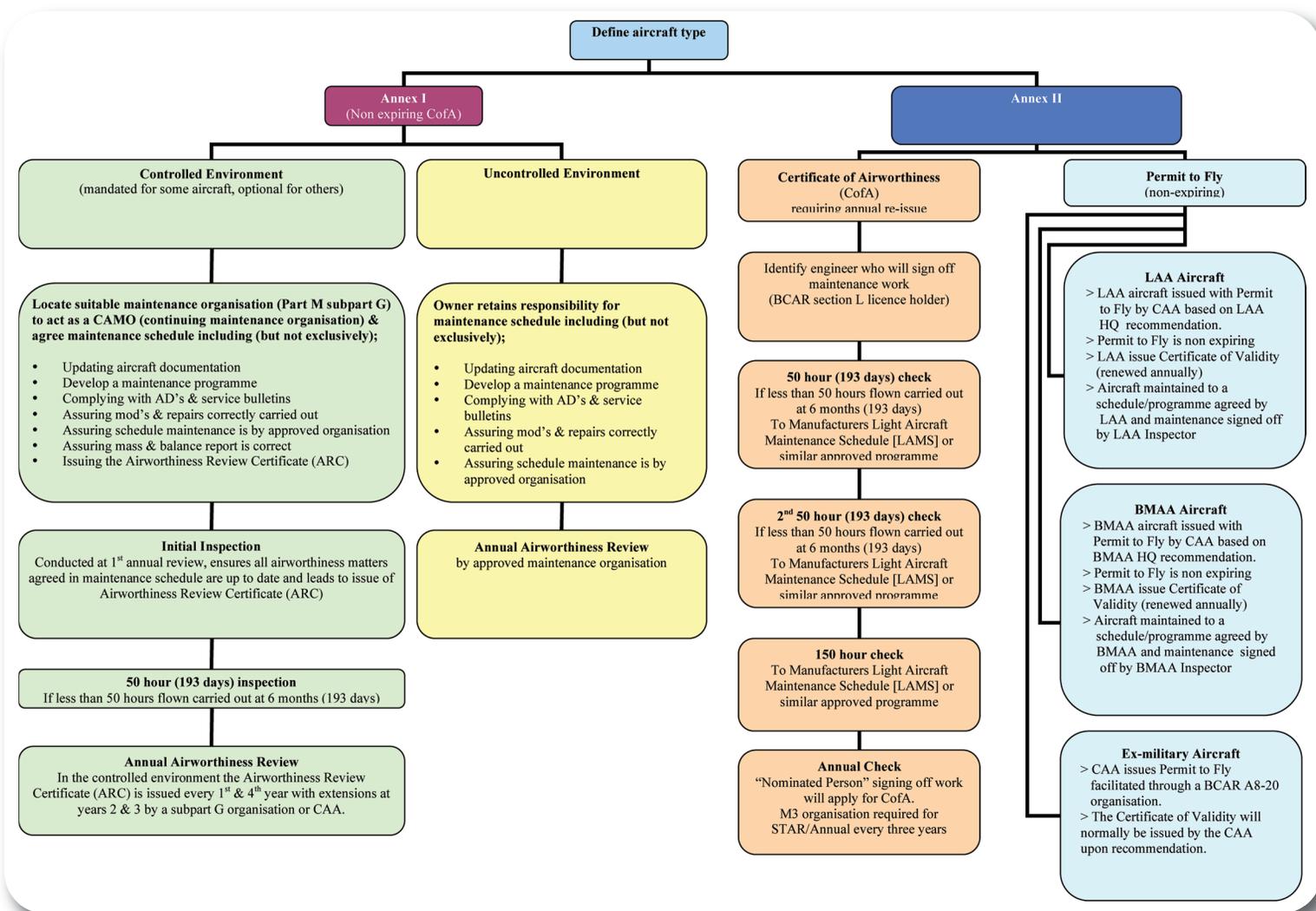
* Letters should be sent to AOPA at 50a Cambridge Street, London, SW1V 4QQ and emails to george@aopa.co.uk. A sample request letter appears on the AOPA website. ■

Light Aircraft Maintenance Organisation Commitment to Customer

An aircraft owner who is a customer of a light aircraft maintenance organisation that subscribes to the AOPA Code of Practice for Maintenance and Repair is provided the following commitment.

AOPA Code of Practice for Maintenance and Repair

- We will endeavour to contact you at least two weeks in advance of any scheduled maintenance due to fix a mutually acceptable time and date to receive your aircraft at our facility.
- A full explanation of any mandatory requirements ADs, SBs, etc. that you need to have carried out when your aircraft is with us, in addition to the routine scheduled work, will be given in detail.
- Any additional work requested by you will be agreed at the time of booking.
- Estimates and quotations can be provided upon request and before any work is carried out if required.
- Accepted methods of payment will be confirmed prior to any work commencing. (For lengthy or expensive projects stage payments may be agreed)
- We will agree with you the parts to be used. Should you wish to source and pay for parts directly this can be discussed and we may be able to agree, subject to the inclusion of a suitable administration fee to cover the approval of any necessary paperwork that you need to provide.
- All parts supplied by us remain our property until we are in receipt of cleared funds.
- Replaced parts will be made available to you for examination upon request. (Unless required for part exchange by our supplier.)
- The quality of any subcontract work e.g. avionics, weighing, welding etc. remains our responsibility unless purchased directly by yourself.
- Any additional work found to be needed, during the maintenance procedure, will be advised to you in writing or by email, and will be required to be prior authorised by you, unless otherwise agreed.
- All elements of the work carried out will be explained in full upon collection/delivery.
- Final invoicing will clearly show labour, parts, additional charges and VAT. Once our explanation of the work is complete payment is due upon collection/delivery, which should be within seven days. Thereafter, a daily storage charge may be raised.
- Aircraft must have valid insurance whilst within our custody
- We ensure that all our staff are competent to carry out the work within their responsibilities.
- A competent member of staff will appropriately supervise trainees.
- Appropriate equipment is used to carry out the work we undertake.
- All work is carried out in strict accordance of the National Airworthiness Authority regulations appropriate to your aircraft.
- In the event of a complaint our Chief Engineer or Accountable Manager should be informed immediately.



Benefits of AOPA Membership

As an AOPA member you are entitled to make use of any or all of the benefits listed here. You may find some will save you money, and at the same time you will be helping your Association



The AOPA Aircrew card

With the ever increasing requirement to produce photo identification, the AOPA air crew card is a valuable asset as it shows your photo as well as your pilot's licence number and AOPA membership number. The AOPA air crew card is also extremely useful in negotiating discounts in the UK and throughout the world. Let us know how your air crew card has benefitted you.

HRS

Save on hotel accommodation - free online booking with immediate confirmation at more than 250,00 hotels worldwide. Type the following into your browser you will be directed to the AOPA UK/ HRS hotel booking website: <http://www.hrs.com/web3/?clientId=ZW5fX2FvcGFbnRlc m5hdGlvbmFs,0¤cyISO=ROJQ,0> You can also book over the phone by calling the HRS 24/7 reservation and support centre on: 0208 846 0691. Quote your AOPA UK HRS customer number: 1018822004. If you have any questions about HRS and the service in general, please email: servicedeskuk@hrs.com (please do not use this address to make bookings or cancellations)

HMCA - Hospital and Medical Care Association

Specialises in providing medical and financial benefits for membership groups in the UK. For more information on the services available to AOPA members go to www.hmca.co.uk/aopa.htm

Discounted fuel in Jersey and Guernsey

AOPA members benefit from a 5% discount when purchasing fuel from Fuel Supplies CI Limited. You must be a current member of AOPA and be ready to show your AOPA membership card.

AOPA Lottery Club

The AOPA Lottery is an additional revenue stream for AOPA to fund the work we do on behalf of all of our members. 50% of the funds collected are used to distribute as prizes and 50% to the fighting fund. If you would like to offer additional support by joining the lottery club please email accounts@aopa.co.uk for a registration form. Please note the you MUST be an AOPA member to participate in the Lottery.

Medical Advice

Free initial aviation related medical advice. Email your query to info@aopa.co.uk and mark your email for the attention of Dr Ian Perry.