
SECOND INSPECTIONS AND QUALIFIED PERSONS

1. Introduction

Aircraft in the BMAA fleet differ from many other classes of aircraft in that it is primarily the owner/operator who is responsible for ensuring that they are maintained properly. The advantage of this arrangement is the freedom it gives the owner/operator to operate fairly independently of any 'authority' for most of the year. However with this freedom comes responsibility. In particular, after maintenance work has been performed on the aircraft it is the responsibility of the owner/operator, not a BMAA Inspector¹, to ensure that the work has been completed satisfactorily and that the aircraft is safe for flight.

An important tool available to the owner/operator is the 'second inspection' by a 'qualified person', which is described in this document.

2. Second Inspection

A second inspection is an inspection by an independent person additional to the first inspection by the person who has performed the work. The person is independent if they were not involved in doing the work being inspected.

2.1. When a Second Inspection is required

A second inspection of work is required when there is a significant hazard associated with the work not having been completed satisfactorily. Normally work requiring a second inspection is where either:

- Primary structure has been disturbed. An aircraft's primary structure should be defined in the aircraft's manual.
- A primary flight control – such as elevator, ailerons or rudder – has been disturbed.

If in doubt have a second inspection carried out. It is good practice to have a second inspection carried out even if it is not absolutely required.

3. Qualified Persons

In addition to the person performing the inspection being independent – not directly involved in performing the work that is being inspected – it is important that that person is suitably qualified so that they are capable of judging if the work has been completed satisfactorily.

3.1. A BMAA Inspector as a Qualified Person

The role of a BMAA Inspector is limited to a few, specific tasks¹ such as inspection for revalidation of a Permit to Fly, aircraft weighing and sign-off of approved modifications and repairs. The BMAA has insurance cover for BMAA Inspectors performing these tasks, but does not have insurance cover for Inspectors performing second inspections when a BMAA Inspector is not required. BMAA Inspectors choosing to take on such work must do so at their own risk.

What this means is that someone who is a BMAA Inspector may well be suitably qualified to perform a certain second inspection, but they will not be acting in their capacity as a BMAA Inspector, will not be insured by the BMAA and may not sign the aircraft logbook(s) using their BMAA Inspector number.

4. Examples

4.1. Replacing corroded bolts in the undercarriage

The undercarriage is primary structure and therefore a second inspection is required.

A club member who maintains his own, similar aircraft might be considered suitably qualified. This club member can perform an independent inspection as long as the owner, not he, performed the work.

4.2. Replacing a worn aileron control cable

The ailerons are primary flight controls and therefore a second inspection is required.

A club member who built his own 3-axis control microlight with a similar cable-operated aileron control system might be considered suitably qualified. The club member can perform an independent inspection as long as the owner, not the club member, performs the work.

¹ The precise role of a BMAA Inspector is described in BMAA Technical Information Leaflet 064 – Guide to Airworthiness. A detailed matrix of inspection requirements for all kinds of tasks is contained in BMAA Technical Information Leaflet 044 – SIGMA (Standard Inspection Guidelines for Microlight Aircraft) – the BMAA Inspector's handbook.

SECOND INSPECTIONS AND QUALIFIED PERSONS

4.3. Replacing spark plugs

A contained engine failure is not considered an unacceptable safety risk for a microlight aircraft² and therefore a second inspection is not required (although it is good practice to have a second inspection carried out anyway).

² See BMAA Technical Information Leaflet 064 – Guide to Airworthiness