



**TEXAS ROTAX AND  
LIGHT SPORT AIRCRAFT, LLC**  
**29890 BULVERDE LANE #14**  
**BULVERDE, TX 78163**  
**830-560-9061 Fax 830-406-6053**

## **Pre-Purchase Inspections Rotax Powered Aircraft**

Over the past few months, many prospective Buyers and Sellers have called and inquired about getting a Pre-Purchase Inspection on their aircraft. I would like to write this article to set forth our philosophy and possibly pass along some insight on evaluating an aircraft.

I was one of the original members of NAAA (National Aircraft Appraisers Association) going back to 1998. I have appraised over 200 aircraft, mostly for Banks and Buyers. I no longer perform as an appraiser as the NAAA was disbanded and it now takes too long to get a realistic value as their database no longer exists. But I can perform inspections designed to generate a list of discrepancies that the Buyer and Seller can use to negotiate a fair selling price.

The basic tenant of purchasing an aircraft is safety, followed by its intended use and condition. First, the Buyer should determine is he purchasing the aircraft as is or with a fresh annual plus other inspections like the 91.411 altitude/encoder two-year test, the 91.413 transponder and integrated ADSB Out functions and the 91.207 ELT testing and inspection. If the purchase is as is or out of annual, a Pre-Purchase is greatly recommended prior to negotiating a price. This is usually contracted and paid for by the Buyer and all results are the exclusive property of the Buyer and do not have to be shared with anyone, unless the Buyer wants to use the results (discrepancy list) to negotiate a sales price.

A true Pre-Purchase is usually more expensive than a traditional Annual/Conditional Inspection as we don't assume all SBs, SLs and possibly ADs have been done just because they were stated to be accomplished but we actually look and physically verify they have been done. In addition, we check all engine parameters, controls, performance, airframe flight controls, operation, condition and all paperwork like logs, SB lists Airworthiness Certificates and Operation Limitations. Then we may possibly flight test the aircraft using a test pilot. All this will result in a list of things that group into three categories, 1. Safety, 2. Like to do while opened up and 3. Cosmetic.

There needs to be some agreement signed between Buyer and Seller concerning who pays for what in the event the sale does not go through due to our findings. This has happened more than once. For instance, the Buyer is paying for the pre-Purchase. This is to uncover things that could affect the purchase price or even cause the

Buyer to back away from the purchase altogether. In any event, the Buyer still must pay the Pre-Purchase fee. This is a risk the Buyer takes to find out whether the aircraft is being sold at a fair price or would cost a lot of money to fix.

But what if, for instance, we find a cracked cylinder head or a twisted crankshaft. We can not approve the aircraft for return to service but the Buyer backs out of the transaction. Now the Seller would have to pay to get the aircraft fixed before it can fly again. So the Seller must be aware of the potential liabilities that may crop up due to the Pre-Purchase.

Ideally, the pre-purchase should be done by a shop capable of fixing things that may crop up during the inspection so the aircraft can be returned to service if something that would prohibit a return to service is found. Assuming there are no major things found wrong, the pre-purchase usually ends up generating a list that the Buyer and Seller agree as to who pays for what item. This would generate two work orders, one for the Buyer and one for the Seller and each would be responsible for paying for their work order.

This can get complicated so good communication between the Buyer, Seller and shop is essential and results in a favorable transaction. We, as the shop, are interested in keeping both parties satisfied through a thorough inspection and discrepancy list generation.

I hope this gives an idea of what we do during a pre-purchase inspection and are glad to talk with either party concerning getting this inspection accomplished.