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AIRWORTHINESS

MAINTENANCE

AN ASPECT OF HISTORICAL RECORDS OF LIFE-LIMITED AIRCRAFT PARTS

1. The current serviceability status of what are known in the aviation industry as life-limited aircraft parts and products is an important consideration and is something that must be readily available to the AMO, the aircraft owner, the prospective aircraft buyer, and the Namibian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) at any time. Every aircraft engine has parts for which the manufacturer has established a maximum life limit, and so have airframe structure, components such as undercarriage parts, helicopter rotor parts, and critical flight control parts. Data on engine life-limited parts is usually specified in a Service Bulletin issued by the engine manufacturer, while such detail for airframe life-limited parts is given either in the inspection limits section of the manufacturer's maintenance manual or the aircraft Type Certificate (TC) data sheets.
2. The efforts of the aviation industry towards promoting flying safety through such documentation can, however, be entirely nullified by the absence of adequate and accurate recording of the history of each life-limited part. Inadequate recording entails not only a threat to flying safety but can lead to an insistence by the inspecting authority on precautionary, premature replacement of parts or, at very least, on a back-to-"birth certificate" search, as parts with no proper record documentation may not be put into service.
3. Concomitantly with the need for acceptable recording of the history of life-limited parts goes the consideration as to the period for which such documents should be retained. In this regard the following suggestions are offered here, but also by way of complementing AIC A04/2024.

TYPE OF RECORD		PERIOD OF RETENTION	
		MINIMUM LEGAL REQUIREMENT	PROPOSED DURATION
1.	Scheduled inspections, routine maintenance	5 Years	10 Years
2.	Modifications	5 Years	Permanent
3.	Life-limited parts	Permanent	Permanent
4.	Airworthiness Directives	Permanent	Permanent

5.	Total times in service of airframes, engines, rotors and propellers.	Permanent	Permanent
6.	Time since overhaul of all components having specified overhaul period.	Permanent	Permanent
7.	Current status and time since inspection.	Permanent	Permanent
8.	Worksheets containing measurements, fits and clearances and other pertinent measurements etc.	5 Years	10 Years