

WASSI



Walsh Aviation Support Society Inc.

Chairman's Report – January 2020

Another eventful year, but one that certainly did **not** go to plan!

During the last financial year, 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019, WASSI achieved the major milestone of completing the refurbishment of Piper Tomahawk PA38 ZK-FML. The aircraft being on-line for the 53rd Walsh Memorial Scout Flying School (WMSFS) in January 2019.

We secured a dry lease with Wellington Aero Club (WAC) for the period FML is not at the school. WAC are a very professionally run organisation, with similar values to our own.

However, in 2019 FML was out of the air for nearly six months. The engine was expected to reach its 12 year 'life', in September 2020, however on its 100hr/annual inspection in April 2019 it became obvious that corrosion within the engine was serious and beyond safe and economic repair. This was due to FML having sat for extended periods, unused and outdoors.

This surprise had two immediate effects. Firstly, we were unable to fly FML and generate much needed funds for further upgrade of the aircraft systems. And secondly, we had to find and fund a replacement engine. Following extensive discussions and research, the decision was taken to purchase a refurbished engine from Lycoming in the US.

This was facilitated through their NZ agent, Oceania Aviation in Dunedin. The process took significantly longer than initially indicated but has now been completed.

FML was returned to the air in late October with a new engine giving a life of 12 years.



Another effect of FML being out of the air, was the opportunity to consider other aspects of the aircraft equipage. As ADS-B OUT capable transponders are being mandated by the government for flight in controlled airspace in the very near future, it was a timely investment to make. A Garmin unit is now fitted and functional. The New Zealand government have subsequently announced funding support for the fitting of ADS-B, so we are expecting a partial refund (understood to be in the region of \$2,500) in the near future.

Older generation vacuum systems have a reasonably high maintenance requirement compared with modern technology, so the decision was taken to completely remove the suction pump and associated components and replace the system with an ASPEN 1000 EFIS. The Aspen was paid for by a very generous donation specifically for this purpose.

The strobe lights were also replaced with an LED system, which do not create radio interference, are much brighter, and require much less ongoing maintenance.

During FML's original restoration in late 2018, the aircraft was fitted with AMSAFE Airbag Seatbelts. However, these proved to be difficult to use effectively by pilots of average stature.

Coincidentally, the seatbelts became subject to an inertial reel recall and an offer of return for a full refund was made by the manufacturer. As it appears the SOARS system is just a little immature for our aircraft type, and as we are needing to be very careful with our funds, we chose to remove these seatbelts from the aircraft and accept the refund. The refund was received in December 2019. The fitting of this type of system will be reconsidered in the future.

In July, while all of the above was going on, we identified an opportunity to purchase a Cessna 152 Aerobat at a very supportive price. The aircraft had been dismantled and was part-way through its SIDs programme when the organisation that owned it went into receivership. It was subsequently purchased from the receiver, with the owner initially planning to complete the SIDs.

However, their plans changed and WASSI took the opportunity to purchase the airframe and propeller from the new owner.

However, it did not come with an engine, so that will need to be sourced and funded in due course.

ZK-MUM will be known to many as an aircraft we have had on the line at Walsh over the years, and it will be great to see it as the second WASSI aircraft.



It is now secured with Jay McIntyre at Omaka in Blenheim, and plans are being drawn up to complete the restoration through 2020.

All of this has generated significant unbudgeted costs and put the WASSI under some financial stress at times. Fortunately, we continue to receive steady support, both in the form of regular small donations and occasional larger donations. In the last twelve months we have received donations totaling about \$93,000, with commitments for at least \$5,000 more, and lease income of about \$9,000.

The committee are exploring ways of formally acknowledging those who are financially supporting us. That said, we are also sensitive to the nature of Kiwis, who tend to shy away from publicity about the detail of their altruism. So, we are very open minded on how this might look.

The plan for the next twelve months includes the restoration of MUM's airframe, the upgrade of MUM's lighting, avionics and cabin, and the sourcing and fitting of a new engine. But the plan does not include any more surprises, I expect they'll come anyway!

We have also been informed about another, relatively good condition PA38 Tomahawk, which may come on the market later this year. We apparently have first option, and consideration of this potential opportunity will be made if this transpires.

The committee are developing applications to charitable funding organisations and approaches to individuals, in order to fund the 2020 plans. However, the apparently small, the regular contribution from members is hugely important. At times in 2019, these regular contributions were very helpful in allowing us to meet our obligations in a timely fashion.

So, thank you! You know who you are.

Investment summary for Piper Tomahawk PA38 ZK-FML

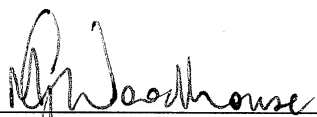
Purchase Price	\$35,000
Initial refurbishment costs	<u>\$31,530</u>
Total investment in the 2018 Financial Year	\$66,530

Further refurbishment costs (including avionics)	\$43,976
Lycoming engine replacement	<u>\$58,742</u>
Total investment in the 2019 Financial Year	\$102,718
Total investment in FML as at 30 September 2019	<u>\$169,248</u>

Investment summary for Cessna 152A ZK-MUM

Purchase Price	\$10,000
Transport and storage costs	<u>\$3,538</u>
Total investment in the 2019 Financial Year	<u>\$13,538</u>

Total investment in aircraft in the 2019 Financial Year **\$182,786**



Mark Woodhouse
WASSI Chairman

Date 20 December 2019