AIRWORTHINESS ALERT

LAA/AWA/14/08
4th June 2014

Pioneer 200 and 200M Aircraft

Inspection for Water Damage to Fuselage Structure

LAA Engineering has received a worrying report from a Pioneer 200 owner about some serious damage he has found in the primary structure of his aircraft; the damage has been caused by water which has leaked into the airframe via small gaps in the junction between the lower fuselage inspection panel and its supporting wooden structure.

The Pioneer 200 series fuselage is primarily a wooden structure and is therefore very susceptible to damage by water and, especially in the essentially very minimal structure of the very small light aircraft or microlight, no structural damage whatsoever can be tolerated.

The aircraft involved which is now undergoing major repairs, was five years old and, for much of its life, stored outside under removable covers.

Fig. 1. (Opposite) Shows the damage found to the port lower longeron when the lower fuselage inspection panel was removed. This picture was taken after the wings and tailplane had been removed and the aircraft laid on trestles on its side.

Fig. 2. This picture shows well the extent of the damage; in this picture the repair team has removed all the damaged wood revealing just how much of the structure was compromised.

Because of this report LAA Engineering has published an Airworthiness Information Leaflet (AIL), LAA/MOD/334/003 issue 1, requiring all Pioneer 200 and Pioneer 200M owners to remove the lower fuselage inspection panel and inspect the aircraft's wooden primary structure before further flight. This AIL can be downloaded HERE.