

October 5, 2009

Western Aircraft Propeller is a family-owned company that has been an FAA-certified repair station since 1972. It has overhauled more than 22,000 propellers and has never had an incident report filed against it nor had enforcement by the FAA in the past 37 years. Western Aircraft Propeller had an FAA annual inspection completed in February 2009. The PMI asked for revisions to the manual, the work-order and thoroughly inspected the repair station for compliance, all of which were found to be in FAA Compliance.

Three months later, after a disgruntled customer turned Western Aircraft Propeller into the FAA, a group of four inspectors descended on Western and did a focus inspection on everything. Every single thing in the shop was scrutinized and four different inspectors, citing four different interpretations of regulations, generated a list of items Western needed to address. Western Aircraft Propeller agreed to comply with the list and completed it fully 30 days later. The FAA in turn had three different inspectors over a period of three months certify that the discrepancies had been fully resolved. During this time period, unknown to Western, the FAA proceeded without any warning and issued an SAIB against Western even though the agency's own wording addressed the subject as not an unsafe condition, and not mandatory but voluntary.

Western received word of the SAIB directly from a customer to whom it was mailed. Western Aircraft Propeller has asked for return of its specifications for more than 90 days and the FAA has failed to respond in any way. The return of the specifications was agreed to in a letter from the director of Airworthiness in Oregon's FSDO dated June 9, 2009. Many of the facts listed on the SAIB are only opinions based on one inspector's interpretation of FAA regulations, and his findings are unclear and misleading. Western Aircraft Propeller has therefore sent a rebuttal to Washington and asked for a full investigation into improper behavior and practices by the local Oregon FSDO.

Western Aircraft Propeller has been virtually stripped of the operation specifications it has used for 37 years and has had to hire legal representation. We hope that it will be found that the FAA did not have reasonable basis for proceeding with this SAIB and that it proceeded without substantial justification.

Sincerely,

Laurie Marshall

Western Aircraft Propeller