

## How to Purchase a Used Mooney A Check List

- 1) Mission Profile: What will you do 80 – 90 % of time with this airplane?
  - a. Fly one hour or less per flight?
  - b. Fly one to two hour flights?
  - c. Fly two to four hour flights?
  - d. Fly below 10,000 feet?
  - e. Fly above 10,000 feet?
  - f. Fly coast to coast?
  - g. High, hot, mountainous airports?
  - h. VFR, IFR (soft or hard)?
  - i. Winter ops (icing)?

The answers to these questions will determine the airplane you need.
- 2) Budget: How much money can you afford to spend per month for ownership expenses not including the purchase price of the airplane. These expenses include insurance, fuel, maintenance, engine reserve, tie down, hanger, and radio upgrades.
  - a. \$100.00 to 200.00 per month?
  - b. \$200.00-500.00 per month?
  - c. \$500.00- 1,000 per month?
  - d. \$1,000.00-2,000.00 per month?
- 3) Pay load requirements: Will you fly alone or do you have a large family, etc. that will go with you 80% of the time?
- 4) Reliability: If you plan to use the airplane to commute to work on a regular basis. A newer low time airplane will be more reliable than a 40 year old airplane.
- 5) Aircraft purchase price: If you finance this purchase what size payment will fit in with item #2?
- 6) Market survey: Is the airplane you want selling for more or less than blue book value? Blue book value is a basis for the amount of financing one can obtain.
- 7) Insurability: How much Mooney time do you have and are you IFR rated?

Now that you have narrowed down the airplane that best suits your mission profile and fits into your budget, take the first step towards ownership. Let's go shopping. There are many sources for finding an airplane (trade magazines, internet sales, local news papers, ext,) but it will always be more economical to look first in you local area. Then expand the search geographically.

Once you locate an airplane that meets the above criteria, call the owner or broker. Ask for copies of all the log books from present day all the way back to new, the day it left the factory. Also ask for the current tach/Hobbs time. If the owner or broker is reluctant to do this, offer to pay a minimal amount for their time to reproduce these records. If they are still reluctant, do not consider purchasing this airplane.

- 8) Data: Once you get the log books, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions:
  - a- Total time on airframe
  - b- Total time on engine
  - c- Total time SMOH on engine, year done, and by whom
  - d- Total time STOH and type of cylinders
  - e- Total time on prop
  - f- Total time SMOH on prop and year done
  - g- Total time on minor engine components, spark plugs, fuel filter, etc.
  - h- Total time and date, landing gear donuts last replaced
  - i- Date of last paint job and type of paint job
  - j- Date of last interior job

- k- Date of last IFR certification
- l- Date of aircraft and ELT battery
- m- Date of O<sub>2</sub> bottle hydro test and total time, age in years
- n- Type of O<sub>2</sub> bottle (steel, 3HT or composite)
- o- For early electric gear, date and hours last gear set was installed
- p- For later electric gear, date and hours last back spring clutch replacement was done
- q- For all electric gear, date and hours last motor replacement was done
- r- For manual gear, date and hours of down lock block replacement
- s- List all modifications, date done and tach/Hobbs time
- t- Inspections: Dates and total time.

9) Damage History:

- a. Major or minor damage?
- b. What year and what tach time?
- c. Type of repairs done?
- d. New or used parts installed?

10) Radio equipment installed

11) AD compliance record

12) List all repetitive ADs and when they are due

13) Are there any lapses in the log books?

14) Where did the airplane sit during this lapses?

- a. location
- b. hangared / outside / shaded

15) Where was the plane based most of its life?

- a. near the coast
- b. in a dry desert climate
- c. in high humidity

16) Compression readings in engine log book: Go back five years and compare each year; steady or slowly decreasing?

17) Total time on magnetos

18) Total time on vacuum pump (overhauled or new)

19) Total time on prop governor

20) Total time on alternator/ generator

21) Total time on alternator drive (M20K only)

22) Total time on turbocharger

23) Does airplane have the original engine installed?

24) Do the fuel tanks show constant signs of maintenance?

25) Does any one item show constant signs of maintenance?

Now that you have the answers to the above questions you can decide if this is the airplane worth further review. Most used airplanes have something wrong with them, so don't despair. Just determine what it is going to cost to fix and figure that into the purchase price that you are willing to pay. Good luck and happy hunting!

Kerry McIntyre  
 MAPA Shop Talk author since 1999  
[kerry@knr-inc.com](mailto:kerry@knr-inc.com)  
 IA2285385A&P

KNR, Inc.  
 PO Box 1010  
 Evanston, WY 82931  
 307-789-6866