

TIPS FOR BUYING USED BUSHWHEELS

Alaskan Bushwheels are designed for safe landing in the most rugged off-airport conditions, and if properly cared for, will last many years. But they are expensive, and people are often trying to find a good deal on used Bushwheels. Just keep these tips in mind.

SERIAL NUM

- ✔ Serial numbers are 7 digits. Earlier versions were preceded by 3 letters, ABI or ATR. ABI is Alaskan Bushwheel Inc. and ATR is Alaska Tire and Rubber. ATR was used on the earliest tires made at Fire Lake prior to Oregon.
- ✔ During Oregon's production both prefixes were used, but we dropped the prefix when Airframes took over production.
- ✔ The first 4 digits of the number indicates the year, then the month of manufacture. For example 1404XXX would be April of 2014 mfg. Early tires were 6 digits, where the first digit was the year and then month of mfg; 910XXX would be Oct 1999. All tires built before June of 2000 were built before certification and are not able to be covered by our STC.

PLANT CODE

- ✔ The other way to tell if tires can be used under our STC is the plant code. That appears in the large block of lettering along with the TSO number, inflation pressure, and load rating.
- ✔ The plant code appears as either PC7AK or PC7AKO. The AK/AKO indicates it was either built in Alaska or Alaska/Oregon. Only tires with PC7AKO plant codes are STCable.

WEAR SIGNS

- ✔ As an aside there is no way to determine wear of the tire externally for the most part. The only indications the tire may not be usable are the presence of exposed cording or weather checking. Any exposed cord renders the tire non-airworthy and should be avoided. Weather checking is not fatal but obviously not preferred. Small cracks around the valve stem and letters are actually fairly normal even for tires of somewhat recent manufacture.
- ✔ Typical lifespan of a tire is 7-12 years however that can vary a tremendous amount based on storage and use on pavement. Checking the manufacture date is a good way of telling if the tires still have some life in them or not.

STC'S

- ✔ STC's are not transferrable from one aircraft to another as once they are filed for one aircraft it is a permanent part of that aircraft's logbooks. For the tires to be used on a new aircraft the owner has to buy a new copy of the STC for that plane.
- ✔ If the tires are airworthy and have the correct year of manufacture and plant code to be able to issue an STC we can sell the customer a copy of the STC. STC re-issues are \$50 per copy plus postage. We require the serial number on both tires for the STC and of course the \$50. STC's can be picked up in person at AF Birchwood or Reeve and also be ordered over the phone.