

# SLSA Maintenance: Who Can Do?

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Since we sell SLSA trikes one of the questions we frequently get is "what maintenance can I do myself." The answer to this question is found in both the FARs (Federal Aviation Regulations) and the maintenance manuals for your aircraft. For GA aircraft the FARs are the final authority but for SLSA aircraft the manufacturer has the final say. For example, if the FAR says you can do a particular task but the manufacturer says you cannot then you cannot.

For example, if the FARs state you can change the spark plugs but the manufacturer says that only a licensed mechanic can do that task then you must take your aircraft to a licensed mechanic to get the plugs changed.

FAR 43 is where you find the regulations on maintenance. FAR 43.3(g) says "The holder of a sport pilot certificate may perform preventive maintenance on an aircraft owned or operated by that pilot and issued a special airworthiness certificate in the light-sport category." What constitutes "preventive maintenance"? FAR 1.1 gives the following definition: "*Preventive maintenance* means simple or minor preservation operations and the replacement of small standard parts not involving complex assembly operations." FAR 43 Appendix A goes on to give a laundry list of allowed tasks.

But the manufacturer's maintenance manuals must be your first source of what you can and cannot do. The maintenance manual must lay out what level of certification is required to do a particular task. The AirBorne Maintenance Manual specifically refers you to FAR 43 Appendix A for authorized preventative maintenance tasks so that their manual and the FARs are in synch. They also refer you to Rotax's Maintenance Manuals for the same reason. So if the Rotax Maintenance Manual or FAR 43 Appendix A allows you to do a task AirBorne allows it by default just by referring you to those documents in the AirBorne Maintenance Manual. When in doubt contact the manufacturer or your dealer to find out what you can do and get it in writing. In many cases, the manufacturer's written authorization will have to go into your maintenance logbook.

What Rotax allows is a little harder to define. Rotax has authorized three maintenance courses aimed at three different maintenance audiences. The first course, or Service Course, is aimed at the owner/operator (and is a pre-requisite for maintenance professionals desiring to take the higher level maintenance courses) covers engine system and those maintenance items an owner/operator can do such as:

- Verifying Oil Level
- Checking Magnetic Plug
- Performing an Oil Change
- Checking the Propeller Gearbox general condition and verifying friction torque
- Carburetor Synchronization and needle adjustment
- Differential Compression Tests
- Inspections per Manufacturer's Published Maintenance Schedules

- Test run of the engine

Rotax's Maintenance and Heavy Maintenance courses are for licensed mechanics and go into ever deeper levels of maintenance tasks. While an owner/operator can take these courses they must still be a licensed mechanic to execute these higher level tasks. For more information on these course go to [Aero Technical Institute](#). They offer these courses for both 2 and 4-stroke engines and they are EXCELLENT. Tell them Precision Windsports sent you.