

RV-12 Progress Report

It's probably past time to for a little 'state-of-the-RV-12' post. So, where do we stand in March 2009?

KIT SALES

Two hundred and ten RV-12 projects have been started, some of them as far away as Europe, Australian and South Africa. The first four kits (of the six that make up the complete airplane) are available and shipping. The latest of these, the Finishing Kit, was released in late February and the first ones have left the building. Avionic Kits, which are visible on the horizon and Powerplant Kits, with new Rotax engines and Sensenich propellers, are close behind.

PROGRESS IN THE FIELD

Our early "beta-testers" Jim Cone (West Coast) and Mitch Lock (East Coast) have completed all the empennage, wing and fuselage kits – and they are not alone. Several other builders have caught up with them. We are giving current kit holders first crack at Finishing Kits, so we expect a number of projects to be moving forward again very shortly. It is possible that we could see a few customer-built RV-12s at Oshkosh this year!

S-LSA CERTIFICATION

We are spending some time on final details of the Avionics and Powerplant kits, but a lot more time is going into the documentation necessary for S-LSA certification. This is not a simple, fast or easy process!

The FAA recently audited some of the existing S-LSA manufacturers' certification documentation and reportedly was not impressed with the results. The FAA has allowed S-LSA manufacturers to essentially self-approve by submitting an affidavit stating that they have accomplished all of the flight test, flight manuals, maintenance program, QA requirements, etc. The FAA accepted the affidavit as proof that the testing and documentation was complete. Apparently this system has some shortcomings.

When Van's submits the package for S-LSA certification for the RV-12, we expect it will become the 'gold standard' for S-LSA certification. Our engineering crew has been very thorough and complied with the letter and spirit of the rules. We expect no 'bumps' once our documentation is submitted.

BUILDER CERTIFICATION

In an effort to clarify the options builders have for certifying their RV-12, we recently added a cover letter to the on-line RV-12 order form.

Read it here: http://www.vansaircraft.com/pdf/order_forms/rv-12_order_form.pdf

If a builder intends to license their RV-12 as an E-LSA, they will be required to supply a completed Form 8130-15 (Light Sport Aircraft Statement of Compliance) to the FAA at the time of licensing. The completed Form 8130-15 will be supplied to the builder by the manufacturer (Van's Aircraft, Inc.) only after the builder has purchased all of the kits in their complete form. Van's Aircraft is unable to issue the 8130-15 Statement of Compliance unless every component of the kit (including powerplant and propeller) has been purchased through Van's Aircraft.

KIT PURCHASE POLICIES

The RV-12 Kit was designed to be licensed as an Experimental Light Sport Aircraft (E-LSA). We strongly emphasize that the RV-12 is the product of careful design and extensive testing. From the spinner to the rudder, it is a fully integrated system. We do not believe that it is in the best interests of any RV-12 builder to delete, substitute or modify any component in the kit.

Each kit is designed, produced, sold, crated and shipped to optimize efficiency and the value of the kit. Kit component deletions result in reduced efficiency and increased costs. Subsequently, the credit allowed for deleted components will be adjusted to reflect the discounted price of the component as part of the complete kit. Builders will receive less than retail credit for deleted kit components (including engines and propellers).

As with kit component deletions, RV-12 builders who choose to return kit components and do not receive an exact replacement will not receive a Form 8130-15 and will not be eligible to license their RV-12 as an E-LSA. In other words, if a builder receives a defective part, it can be returned and replaced, but builders can't just return parts that they've decided not to use and still receive a Form 8130-15. Van's standard return policies and restocking fees will apply to RV-12 components if a builder does choose to return them.

A customer who deletes or returns components will be required to fill out, sign and return a "Non-Standard Kit" affidavit prior to shipment of their kit or receiving credit for a return.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Several options are being developed for RV-12

<http://www.vansaircraft.com/pdf/revisions/RV-12/01-01.pdf> .

These include:

- A lighting package, including interior and position lights, strobe and landing light.
- An autopilot installation.
- A dual EFIS package.
- A gearleg/wheel fairing kit.
- An interior panel kit in colors matching the seat cushions

We do not intend to market these until after the complete RV-12 kit is shipping. All the option kits are designed to be easily retro-fittable to finished RV-12s.