The Seawind Flyer

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Seawind Inc. **PO Box 1041 Kimberton, Pa 19442**

PH: 610-917-1120 **seawind@seawind.biz**
FAX: 610-933-3335 **www.seawind.biz**

Sun 'n Fun 2004

The annual event started off very soggy, but the weather improved and the planes started to arrive. The show opened too close to Easter Sunday so the attendance was down. This happened a few years ago and the attendance was down then as well. Maybe the powers in charge will get the message. We did have a very good reception at the Seawind display. The cabin mock-up of the certified version was on display. Many people took the opportunity to sit in the cabin and witness the unobstructed view.

The panel space is as big as your wallet

The mock up also had the water motor installed for display. It was a real hit with the crowd.

It fits into the left nose wheel compartment.

The propeller goes down through the hull

We also had on display, the proof of concept Seawind N46SW. It was sporting the detailing (striping) of the certified 300C, plus the certified interior and instrument panel for the IFR version.

Each day, the Seawind flew in the fly by showcase and each day the reaction was the same. "Wow, I could not believe it could go so fast" or "I can't believe how quiet it is" or "that was impressive".
Each afternoon we put the camper top on N46SW.

This development was also a hit with the crowd. It showed that the versatility of the Seawind is only limited by your imagination.

We made the front page of the Sun 'N Fun daily newspaper.

All in all, it was a good show. The road improvements have been substantial. Gone are the days when people would be jammed up for hours in traffic. Getting in and out was quick and easy.

Next year we plan to have the flying certified Seawind on display.

Landing Options

Currently, the most commercially successful composite general aviation aircraft is the Cirrus. It comes as no surprise when people ask us about a ballistic parachute, because Cirrus has one. It has been deployed on a few occasions.

We did look at what was involved in such an installation on the Seawind, even though we do not feel that we need one. The high mounted engine and propeller presents major obstacles to housing the chute as well as the deployment.

Why don't we need one? The answer is five fold.

First, the Seawind is far more rugged than any other land plane and probably the most rugged of all seaplanes. Because of its water capability, the Seawind is designed to resist loads all over the structure. In order to resist mechanical loads from beaching, docking, hitting rocks or submerged objects, the exterior surfaces are generally twice as strong as would be needed for normal flight loads.

Second, the Seawind has excellent slow speed flight characteristics as a result of its flaperons, slotted flaps and Horner type wing tip sponsons. The wing traps and compresses the air under the wing as the Seawind approaches the land or water.

Add to that, the large flat plate hull bottom and you have a tremendous ground effect. The Seawind is capable of touch down speeds of 55 knots . For a high performance retractable landing gear aircraft that is outstanding. The stall speed of the kit aircraft is 51 knots. The stall speed of the certified aircraft should be between 49 and 50 knots.

The Seawind has a 10.95 to 1 glide ratio, so at 5500 feet you can glide 11 miles. Surely you can find a suitable spot to land (or water) in that distance.

Third, the Seawind provides a myriad of landing options when compared to any land plane and fixed gear land planes in particular.

If you have to make an unpowered landing in a fixed gear land plane, you have to look for an airport, a paved surface, a highway without wires or vehicles or known firm turf. Otherwise, you are in danger of digging in and flipping over. The Seawind has so many options. For instance, there are many more bodies of water than there are land airports. A marsh, a plowed field, a corn field, snow, ice or even a sandy desert are places that can be safely used in an emergency. **Just land with the landing gear retracted**. The center "V" shaped keel is sacrificial. It is a non-structural shape needed for hydrodynamics. You will do some paint and surface damage, but the aircraft will fly again and you will walk away. In fact, we recommend that unless it is a runway or known firm turf, all off field landings are to be made with the gear up. What other airplane can measure up to the Seawind?

Forth, the Seawind has a crashworthy design. Land planes with a nose or wing mounted engine are subject to the propeller and engine digging in, and a sudden stop. The Seawind nose and fuselage are shaped not to dig-in, but to glance off the surface. The Seawind will not have a prop strike or a sudden engine stoppage. It will slide along the surface and dissipate the energy offering protection to the passengers.

Fifth, the Seawind has an encapsulated foam core and four floatation compartments. Unlike aluminum seaplanes or any land planes, the Seawind will not sink, even if swamped. Most airplanes will "definitely float", but not "indefinitely".

If you are concerned about safety you can buy a Seawind or an airplane with a parachute.

Proof

This homebuilt Seawind lost power from contaminated fuel and the pilot had the good sense to keep the gear up when he landed in a soft farm field.

Notice the rut from the keel in the soft earth

How many aircraft can be towed on their belly with a tractor?

It was picked up, put on a flat bed and trucked to a nearby airport. Try that with an aluminum airplane.

Two days later, it flew from Nevada to Florida.

Insurance

An article appeared in an aviation magazine last month which had a few statements which might be misleading and need clarification.

It said that we have started an insurance cooperative. We have started an insurance program for the certified Seawind only. It is not for any other aircraft. The insurance jargon for this type of insurance is a "captive" not a cooperative.

The plan cannot insure the kit built experimental version. The underwriters have no guarantee that the kit version was built to the standards required. Once the kit was shipped, SNA Inc. had no control of the workmanship or accuracy of the assembly.

Quite frankly, many of the builders made many changes to the aircraft which resulted in a number of incidents.

Others did some downright dangerous things including installing 450 to 700 HP power plants and others installed automobile engines.

For some reason, many builders made fuel system changes only to have a fuel starvation problem even though the proof of concept aircraft has a simple system and never has had a fuel failure. This is the main reason why SNA Inc. has stopped selling the kit version.

The article did go on to say that the key to the program is training and recurrent training, cost control on repairs and fairness by the plan administrators. We believe that many companies will follow our lead.

Look for us

Look for us on the cover of the Oshkosh issue of Aviator's Guide.

Seawind Travel Plans

After Sun 'N Fun we have been attending a number of smaller fly-in events. We are scheduled to appear at the following major events:

Oshawa - Canadian Aviation Expo near Toronto
June 18 - 20.

Oshkosh - Air Adventures - July 27 - August 2
Site numbers 230 and 231.

Reno Air Show and Race - Reno Nevada,
September 16 - September 19.

Copperstate Airshow - Phoenix, Arizona,
October 7 - 10.

MBAA Airshow - Las Vegas, Nevada,
October 12 - 14

We hope you will stop by and see us.

Seawind Online

The Seawind flyer is now being published online on our www.seawind.net web site. We hope you will visit the site. It contains comprehensive information about the Seawind 300C as well as many flight reports, testimonials, flight characteristics, pricing, training, gift items, news, show schedules and much more.

Price Increase

We have been offering the Seawind at an "introductory" price of $289,700.00 US.

Having a strong order book is very important to the financial community.

We will hold that price during the Oshkosh AirVenture Show. After that, there will be a price increase.

You have no risk. Your deposit goes directly into, and will be held in an interest bearing bank account. If we fail to meet our promise, your deposit will be refunded.

What's New

The JPI Company's new EDM-900 engine monitor has been installed in our proof of concept aircraft. The EDM-900 is a analog and digital display which gives all the important engine functions such as:
RPM, manifold pressure, oil temperature, oil pressure, fuel pressure, amps, volts, outside air temperatures, fuel flow, % of horse power, 6 cylinder EGT, 6 cylinder CHT, fuel quantity left and right tanks, total fuel, and fuel flow. These are all displayed by lighted analog bars as well as actual exact digital readings.
In addition, it also displays alerts and/or data regarding fuel remaining for trip, engine tach time, programmed limits with alerts for all the analog or digital parameters, and you can download all the data for the last 50 hours of flight.

JPI has custom programming features just for the Seawind such as fuel balance information for water operations, and they are providing a 7 ft long capacitance fuel probes for accurate fuel level quantity display.

The JPI Company EDM 900 is standard equipment for the certified Seawind 300C. Many of the kit version Seawinds have used other similar displays or glass cockpit panels.

Most have been very problematic and required trips back to the factory before working properly. Because of those experiences we investigated long and hard before selecting JPI.

The EDM-900 fired up the first time with unbelievable accuracy. JPI even worked with us to accommodate our proof of concept Seawind which has fuel probe senders manufactured by another company. Not having to take the wings off to install new fuel probes was a big relief and time saver. JPI cooperation enables us to make the EDM 900 available to the flying fleet and the kit version aircraft under construction.

JPI over the years has been rated as one of the top companies for engine monitoring equipment. We are impressed with their customer service.

EDM 900

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PO Box 1041
Kimberton, PA 19442