



An Eye-Opening Visit...

On Sunday November 2, 2008, Zenair personnel visited the [Maillen Aéroclub](#), in Maillen, Belgium, home of a few dozen Zenair aircraft of various types, including many CH 601 XL. With tension-meter in hand, 14 aircraft owners were assisted with a verification of the control-cable tension in their aircraft, as per Zenair's advisory directive #[ZE-2008-01](#). The findings were revealing: Only two of the 14 aircraft checked had all their control-cables set within factory-specified tolerances.

"It is normal to see cables loosen a bit as an aircraft builds up flight hours" said Nicolas Heintz of Zenair Sarl, "this is why it is standard practice in general aviation to have cable-tensions checked periodically (i.e. at annual inspection time). We are glad that our visit to Maillen this weekend helped pilots better understand the importance of maintaining their aircraft to specifications. More and more [Zenair Dealers](#) will offer maintenance services (including cable-tension verification) for Zenair designs in the future. For more details, or for assistance with maintaining their Zenair design, owners can contact their local aircraft mechanic or [Zenair representative](#)."

Searching to understand why pilots would not be more conscious of the maintenance needs of their aircraft, one notices that most aircraft that were flown with loose cables were factory built (rather than assembled from a kit by their owner). One can conclude that pilots who build their own aircraft are more aware about what to check and better equipped (tools and skills) to maintain their planes. Pilots should regularly review the information contained in their aircraft manuals and should be familiar with aircraft maintenance standards and practices. Always ask if in doubt; contact your nearest Dealer with questions!

More on cable tension meters: There are many cable tension meters available on the market today, from very expensive professional models to more affordable units perfectly adequate for use on amateur-built and/or ultralight aircraft. The compact model used by Zenair during our visit to Maillen is a widely-used model available from ULM-Technologie. It can be ordered on-line [HERE](#). For more information on this instrument, you can also visit [this page](#) (info en français).

New [photo-guide](#) now available: To help owners check the control-cable tension on their aircraft, Zenair has prepared an easy to follow step-by-step photoguide. This guide can easily be downloaded and printed, for quick reference in the field; the last page also provides a convenient record-keeping chart for all cables to be checked. [Click HERE](#) to download your copy.



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