



## Tail Wheels & Tires for the Seabee

There have been a few questions about the tail wheels and tires on our Seabees. Below is an explanation of these options.

The original Type Certificate calls for a 10.00 SC wheel which is 3" diameter, and a small tire. These look like cartoon tires and with the prominence of concrete or blacktop runways they last just about as long as a cartoon tire. At least that has been my experience. If you do any beaching at all I think you will find the 10.00 SC tire a bit lacking in support on soft ground.

A long-time option has been the channel tread tire, this is much better for beaching and lasts quite a bit longer than the SC tire. You may get a little static from your IA during an Annual if you don't have the SC tire (at least I did!) This 10.5 x 4 Channel Tread is one of the other two optional tires pictured below (original in center). They both require a 4" wheel or the 3" wheel with the Russ Aircraft adapter rings that are no longer available. A third option is a new tire available from Desser, now VSE Aerospace which they call a 10.00 8 ply. I believe this might be it: <https://shop.vseaviation.com/ia-2802b-01> but we have no experience with this as of this writing. It fits the 3" wheel and has something close to the channel tread we've been familiar with. Please let us know if you have used this tire and how you rate it.

Here is the original Type Certificate information:

200. Tail wheel assy. 10.00, Type I, with 4-ply rating tire
- (a) Goodyear PD-173
  - (b) Bendix 146413
  - (c) Bendix 146414
  - (d) Firestone BO-200-F

(a) through (d) above are the wheel assemblies. The tire is the 10.00, Type I. These SC tires may be a little hard to find so replacements were definitely in the Seabee's future. There is an FAA Advisory Circular addressing part replacement for our "old" Seabees. It is available here:

[https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory\\_Circular/AC\\_23-27.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/AC_23-27.pdf)

The first thing to do is determine your wheel or hub diameter. The original was the 3" wheel or hubs. Later there was an after market modification to increase the hub size to 4" with the adapter rings. We also know of very few Seabees that have a true 4" wheel. I believe this was adapted from the very early Mitsubishi MU-2 nose wheel when it was marketed by Mooney. Also, there may be a new option from Grove Aircraft as well. See below:

Here are some options for the 4" wheels or hubs:



This is the SToA (Specialty Tire of America) tire from Desser Tire Co.  
10 x 3.5-4, 4 ply tire. About \$70.



The SToA tire installed on a Seabee



Three of the 4" tires available  
(Left to right: StoA 10 x 350 x 4 (4") (Desser Tire Co.)  
10.00 SC (3" smooth contour)  
10.5 x 4 (4") (channel tread) the old and famous

These tires are getting a little pricey, as of this writing, the StoA tire was the best deal at \$85, the 10.00 SC tire is \$316 (8 ply), Channel tread (8 ply) tire \$297? (new old stock-NOS if available)! Then the new Channel Tread 10.00 8 for the 3" wheel will run you \$316 as well, not sure you get what you pay for.

Another option may be available from Grove Aircraft. Their Amphibious 4" x 4" wheel is part number 49-7AF <https://www.groveaircraft.com/amphibious.html>. This is used as a nose gear on some Whipline floats. Whipline actually holds the PMA as part of the STC for their floats so it would not be an approved part and would require an FAA form 337 to be filed. It also comes with different size bearings and would require different bearings to work with the Seabee axle. It's a real beauty with sealed bearings.



NOTE: The above photo is just an example. Not 49-7AF.

Check the Seabee Club website for tire installation [“Tips and Tricks”](#). Thanks to member Bruce Hinds for the above information.