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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2012-1124; Directorate Identifier 2012-CE-041-AD; Amendment 39-17304; AD 2012-26-09]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Burkhart GROB Luft- und Raumfahrt GmbH Sailplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Burkhart GROB Luft- und Raumfahrt GmbH Models GROB G 109 and GROB G 109B sailplanes. This AD results from mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by an aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI describes the unsafe condition as corrosion and/or cracking of the elevator control rod that could lead to failure of the elevator control rod with consequent loss of control. We are issuing this AD to require actions to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective February 13, 2013.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD as of February 13, 2013.

ADDRESSES: You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> or in person at Document Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

For service information identified in this AD, contact Grob Aircraft AG, Lettenbachstrasse 9, D-86874 Tussenhausen-Mattsies, Germany; phone: +49 (0) 8268 998 139; fax: +49 (0) 8268 998 200; email: productsupport@grob-aircraft.com; Internet: www.grob-aircraft.com/62.html. You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (816) 329-4148.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Rutherford, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329-4165; fax: (816) 329-4090; email: jim.rutherford@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an AD that would apply to the specified products. That NPRM was published in the Federal Register on October 22, 2012 (77 FR 64437). That NPRM proposed to correct an unsafe condition for the specified products. The MCAI states:

Corroded and cracked elevator control rod in the vertical fin on a Grob G 109B powered sailplane has been reported.

The technical investigation revealed that water had soaked into the elevator control rod through a control bore hole and resulted in corrosion damage and, in case of water freeze between the external control rod and the internal mass balance, in crack of the elevator control rod in the vertical fin.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to failure of the elevator control rod, possibly resulting in loss of control of the sailplane.

To address this unsafe condition, Grob Aircraft AG published Service Bulletin (MSB) 817-64 providing instructions for elevator control rod inspection and replacement.

For the reasons described above, this AD requires accomplishment of inspections of the elevator control rod in the vertical fin and, depending on finding, its replacement with a serviceable part, as well as a revision of powered sailplane Aircraft Maintenance Manual (AMM).

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We received no comments on the NPRM (77 FR 64437, October 22, 2012) or on the determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD as proposed except for minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM (77 FR 64437, October 22, 2012) for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM (77 FR 64437, October 22, 2012).

Costs of Compliance

For Model G109 Sailplanes

We estimate that this AD will affect 31 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it would take about 2 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour.

Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of the AD on U.S. operators to be \$5,270, or \$170 per product.

In addition, we estimate that any necessary follow-on actions would take about 1 work-hour and require parts costing \$680, for a cost of \$765 per product. We have no way of determining the number of products that may need these actions.

For Model G109B Sailplanes

We estimate that this AD will affect 28 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it would take about 3.5 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Required parts would cost about \$78 per product.

Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of the AD on U.S. operators to be \$10,514, or \$375.50 per product.

In addition, we estimate that any necessary follow-on actions would take about 1 work-hour and require parts costing \$738, for a cost of \$823 per product. We have no way of determining the number of products that may need these actions.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this AD:

- (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Is not a "significant rule" under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains the NPRM (77 FR 64437, October 22, 2012), the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new AD:



2012-26-09 Burkhart Grob Luft-Und: Amendment 39-17304; Docket No. FAA-2012-1124; Directorate Identifier 2012-CE-041-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) becomes effective February 13, 2013.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Burkhart GROB Luft-und Raumfahrt GmbH Models GROB G 109 and GROB G 109B sailplanes, all serial numbers, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association of America (ATA) Code 27: Flight Controls.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) originated by an aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI describes the unsafe condition as corrosion and/or cracking of the elevator control rod. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct corrosion and/or cracking of the elevator control rod, which could lead to failure of the elevator control rod with consequent loss of control.

(f) Actions and Compliance

Unless already done, do the following actions:

(1) Within the next 25 hours time-in-service (TIS) after February 13, 2013 (the effective date of this AD) or within the next 60 days after February 13, 2013 (the effective date of this AD), whichever occurs first, and repetitively thereafter at intervals not to exceed every 5 years, inspect the elevator control rod in the vertical fin for corrosion or cracking following the accomplishment instructions in Grob Aircraft AG Service Bulletin No. MSB817-64/2, dated September 6, 2012.

(2) For the purposes of this AD, we define slight corrosion as corrosion you can remove with metal wool and that has no visible pitting in the base metal. If you cannot remove the corrosion with metal wool or if there is visible pitting in the base metal, we define it as heavy corrosion.

(3) If any cracks or heavy corrosion are found during any of the inspections required in paragraph (f)(1) of this AD, before further flight, replace the elevator control rod with an airworthy part following the accomplishment instructions in Grob Aircraft AG Service Bulletin No. MSB817-64/2, dated September 6, 2012, for your applicable sailplane model.

(4) If only slight or no corrosion of the elevator control rod is found during any of the inspections required in paragraph (f)(1) of this AD, before further flight, clean the rod surface and apply a

corrosion inhibitor, as applicable, following the accomplishment instructions in Grob Aircraft AG Service Bulletin No. MSB817-64/2, dated September 6, 2012.

Note 1 to paragraph (f) of this AD: Grob Aircraft AG incorporated the repetitive inspections required by this AD into the instructions for continued airworthiness of the aircraft maintenance manual for the applicable sailplanes.

(g) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, Standards Office, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. Send information to ATTN: Jim Rutherford, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329-4165; fax: (816) 329-4090; email: jim.rutherford@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify your appropriate principal inspector (PI) in the FAA Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), or lacking a PI, your local FSDO.

(2) Airworthy Product: For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

(3) Reporting Requirements: For any reporting requirement in this AD, a federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2120-0056. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be approximately 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are mandatory. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden and suggestions for reducing the burden should be directed to the FAA at: 800 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20591, Attn: Information Collection Clearance Officer, AES-200.

(h) Related Information

Refer to European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Community, AD No.: 2012-0181, dated September 7, 2012; and Grob Aircraft AG Service Bulletin No. MSB817-64/2, dated September 6, 2012, for related information.

(i) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Grob Aircraft AG Service Bulletin No. MSB817-64/2, dated September 6, 2012.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Grob Aircraft AG, Lettenbachstrasse 9, D-86874 Tussenhausen-Mattsies, Germany; phone: +49 (0) 8268 998 139; fax: +49 (0) 8268 998 200; email: productsupport@grob-aircraft.com; Internet: www.grob-aircraft.com/62.html.

(4) You may view this service information at FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (816) 329-4148.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/index.html>.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on December 21, 2012.

John Colomy,
Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.