

41 73 00; facsimile: 011 33 5 62 41 76 54; or the Product Support Manager, SOCATA—Groupe AEROSPATIALE, North Perry Airport, 7501 Pembroke Road, Pembroke Pines, Florida 33023; telephone: (954) 894-1160; facsimile: (954) 964-4141. You may also view this information at the Rules Docket at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karl Schletzbaum, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329-4146; facsimile: (816) 329-4090.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

How Do I Comment on This Proposed AD?

The FAA invites comments on this proposed rule. You may submit whatever written data, views, or arguments you choose. You need to include the rule's docket number and submit your comments to the address specified under the caption **ADDRESSES**. We will consider all comments received on or before the closing date. We may amend this proposed rule in light of comments received. Factual information that supports your ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of this proposed AD action and determining whether we need to take additional rulemaking action.

Are There Any Specific Portions of This Proposed AD I Should Pay Attention To?

The FAA specifically invites comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed rule that might suggest a need to modify the proposed rule. You may view all comments we receive before and after the closing date of the proposed rule in the Rules Docket. We will file a report in the Rules Docket that summarizes each contact we have with the public that concerns the substantive parts of this proposed AD.

How Can I Be Sure FAA Receives My Comment?

If you want FAA to acknowledge the receipt of your mailed comments, you must include a self-addressed, stamped postcard. On the postcard, write "Comments to Docket No. 2003-CE-05-AD." We will date stamp and mail the postcard back to you.

Discussion

What Events Have Caused This Proposed AD?

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, recently notified FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all SOCATA Models TB 9, TB 10, TB 20, TB 21, TB

200, TMB 700, Rallye 100S, Rallye 150T, Rallye 150ST, Rallye 235E, and Rallye 235C airplanes. The DGAC reports inadvertent opening of the Anjou Aeronautique/TRW Repa S.A./L'Aiglon Types 343, 343-1, 343-1, 343M, 343AM, 343B, 343BM, 343C, 343CM, and 343D safety belts and restraint systems.

Further investigation into this subject found that a Model TBM 700 airplane was involved in a fatal accident on March 25, 2002. The report on this accident indicated that the pilot's seat belt buckle was broken and that all seat belts in the aircraft would snap open when given a sharp jerk. The belts involved were all Type 343-1 belts. The report also noted that belts tested in several other TBM 700 airplanes at a nearby hangar were found to snap open when given the quick-jerk test.

What Are the Consequences if the Condition Is Not Corrected?

Failure of the safety belts and restraint systems caused by inadvertent opening of this equipment could result in bodily injury to the occupant during turbulence or landing.

Is There Service Information That Applies to This Subject?

SOCATA has issued the following service letters for the affected airplanes:

Models	Service letter
TB 9, TB 10, TB 20, TB 21, and TB 200	SL 10-057, dated June 2002.
TMB 700	SL 70-027, dated June 2002.
Rallye 100S, Rallye 150T, Rallye 150ST, Rallye 235E, and Rallye 235C	SL 023, dated June 2002.

What Are the Provisions of This Service Information?

The service letters include procedures for:

- Repetitive visual inspections of the seat belt assembly; and
- Replacement of the seat belt assembly.

What Action Did the DGAC Take?

The DGAC classified these service letters as mandatory and, in order to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France, issued the following French ADs:

- AD Number 2002-104(AB), dated February 20, 2002; and
- AD Number 2002-105(AB), dated February 20, 2002.

Was This in Accordance With the Bilateral Airworthiness Agreement?

These airplane models are manufactured in France and are type certificated for operation in the United

States under the provisions of § 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement.

Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept FAA informed of the situation described above.

The FAA's Determination and an Explanation of the Provisions of This Proposed AD

What Has FAA Decided?

The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC; reviewed all available information, including the service information referenced above; and determined that:

- The unsafe condition referenced in this document exists or could develop on other SOCATA Models TB 9, TB 10, TB 20, TB 21, TB 200, TMB 700, Rallye 100S, Rallye 150T, Rallye 150ST, Rallye 235E, and Rallye 235C

of the same type design that are on the U.S. registry;

- The actions specified in the previously-referenced service information should be accomplished on the affected airplanes; and
- AD action should be taken in order to correct this unsafe condition.

What Would This Proposed AD Require?

This proposed AD would require you to replace the Anjou Aeronautique/TRW Repa S.A./L'Aiglon Types 343, 343-1, 343-1, 343M, 343AM, 343B, 343BM, 343C, 343CM, and 343D safety belts and restraint systems.

Cost Impact

How Many Airplanes Would This Proposed AD Impact?

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 617 airplanes in the U.S. registry: