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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-CE-36-AD; Amendment 39-13327; AD 2003-20-09]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Stemme GmbH & Co. KG Model STEMME S10-VT Sailplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Stemme GmbH & Co. KG Model STEMME S10-VT sailplanes that incorporate a certain gear box. This AD requires you to incorporate flight restrictions into the Limitations Section of the sailplane flight manual and fabricate and install a placard close to the throttle lever indicating these restrictions. This AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for Germany. We are issuing this AD to prevent the potential for the lower cog wheel in the gear box to rupture, which could result in loss of power and possible loss of control of the sailplane.

DATES: This AD becomes effective on October 20, 2003.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulation as of October 20, 2003.

We must receive any comments on this AD by November 3, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Use one of the following to submit comments on this AD:

- *By mail:* FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-CE-

36-AD, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

- *By fax:* (816) 329-3771.

- *By e-mail:* 9-ACE-7-

Docket@faa.gov. Comments sent electronically must contain "Docket No. 2003-CE-36-AD" in the subject line. If you send comments electronically as attached electronic files, the files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII.

You may get the service information identified in this AD from Stemme GmbH & Co. KG, Gustav-Meyer-Allee 25, D-13355 Berlin, Germany; telephone: 49.33.41.31.11.70; facsimile: 49.33.41.31.11.73.

You may view the AD docket at FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-CE-36-AD, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Greg Davison, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329-4130; facsimile: (816) 329-4090.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

What Events Have Caused This AD?

The Luftfahrt-Bundesamt (LBA), which is the airworthiness authority for Germany, recently notified FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Stemme GmbH & Co. KG Model STEMME S10-VT sailplanes that incorporate a part number 11AG gear box (serial numbers 43YYQ001 through 43YYQ093). The LBA reports two incidents where the lower cog wheels of the affected gear box failed. In both cases, the web of the cog wheel separated from the shaft.

What Are the Consequences if the Condition Is Not Corrected?

This condition, if not prevented, could cause the lower cog wheel in the gear box to rupture, which could result in loss of power and possible loss of control of the sailplane.

Is There Service Information That Applies to This Subject?

Stemme GmbH & Co. KG has issued Stemme Service Bulletin A31-10-065, Am.-Index: 92a, dated February 21, 2003.

What Are the Provisions of This Service Information?

The service bulletin is divided into two parts as follows:

1. Flight manual limitations and placard installation:

—*Flight manual limitation:* "The operation of the engine will be limited to maximum 100% power (max. continuous power)."

—*Flight manual limitation:* "Hence the take-off procedure (take-off with take-off power 115%, see section 4.5.2.2. of the Flight Manual) must not be selected. Alternative procedures (*i.e.*, take-off with max. continuous power 100%) are published in the Flight Manual."

—*Placard:* Installation of a placard close to the throttle lever with the following: "Operation above 100% continuous power is not allowed! (see SB A31-10-1065)."

2. Replacement of the lower cog wheel (P/N: 43.15.0028) with a modified cog wheel (P/N: 43.15.0043).

What Action Did the LBA Take?

The LBA classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued German AD Number 2002-389/2, Effective date: April 17, 2003, in order to ensure the continued airworthiness of these sailplanes in Germany.

Was This in Accordance With the Bilateral Airworthiness Agreement?

These Stemme GmbH & Co. KG Model STEMME S10-VT sailplanes are manufactured in Germany and are type-certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement.

Per this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the LBA has kept us informed of the situation described above.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of the Proposed AD

What Has FAA Decided?

We have examined the LBA's findings, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Since the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop