



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Small Airplane Directorate
901 Locust, Room 301
Kansas City, Missouri 64110

DEC 27 2012

Ronald Schwenninger
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Allison Park, PA 15101

Subject: Results from Investigation into the Requirements of Paragraphs (f)(1)(ii) and (f)(1)(iii) of Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2012-10-11, Docket No. FAA-2012-0324; Directorate Identifier 2012-CE-008-AD for the Burkhart GROB Luft- und Raumfahrt GmbH Model G 109 and G 109B Powered Sailplanes.

Dear Mr. Schwenninger:

On October 2, 2012, you requested that the Federal Aviation Administration grant a Global AMOC to extend the compliance time for AD 2012-10-11, paragraphs (f)(1)(ii) and (f)(1)(iii). In addition, you requested that the FAA consider the elimination of the requirements found in paragraphs (f)(1)(ii) and (f)(1)(iii) of the AD. On October 5, 2012, the FAA granted the time extension for compliance with AD 2012-10-11, paragraphs (f)(1)(ii) and (f)(1)(iii), until January 09, 2013. The FAA also initiated an investigation into the inspection requirements found in paragraphs (f)(1)(ii) and (f)(1)(iii) of the AD. The FAA has now completed this review and has determined that the requirements will need to be accomplished as specified in order to address the unsafe condition.

The investigation was coordinated with the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), as the state of design authority, and with Grob Aircraft AG, the type certificate (TC) holder. The data provided to the FAA was shared with these parties. In response, Grob Aircraft provided data and analysis to substantiate their position that both an external inspection of the nose plate from the top of the vertical fin closure rib and an internal inspection from beneath the closure rib should be accomplished to ensure early detection of any corrosion issues. EASA concurred with the position of Grob Aircraft.

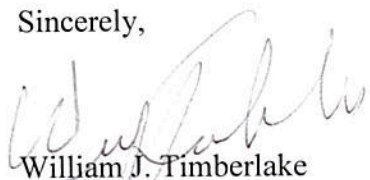
Grob Aircraft maintains that moisture can collect at the intersection of the nose plate and the closure rib on both the top and bottom sides. They assert that it is possible for corrosion to form on the lower portion of the nose plate prior to it forming on the upper portion. The data reveals that during production, a process was applied to the lower portion of the nose plate in order to improve the adhesion of the fiberglass resin. Unfortunately, this process also degraded the corrosion protection properties of that portion of the plate. Newly manufactured nose plates have revised the production process to address this issue.

In addition, Grob Aircraft continues to believe that the nose plates of most aircraft are not fully covered by fiberglass. However, they also stated that corrosion occurring on parts covered by fiberglass or adhesive would be detectable by an observable discoloration of the fiberglass or adhesive.

After further consideration of the data received from all parties, the FAA concludes that there is reasonable justification to keep the inspection requirements found in paragraphs (f)(1)(ii) and (f)(1)(iii) of AD 2012-10-11. The FAA will therefore not revise AD 2012-10-11.

The FAA will continue to consider requests for Alternate Methods of Compliance (AMOC) for this AD, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. If you have any questions, require additional information, or wish to submit an AMOC request, please contact Mr. Jim Rutherford by telephone at 816-329-4165, by fax at 816-329-4090, by email at jim.rutherford@faa.gov, or by sending information to ATTN: Jim Rutherford, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Sincerely,



William J. Timberlake
Manager, Project Support Branch

cc:

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