Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on October 29, 1996.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 96–28321 Filed 11–4–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96–CE–19–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Schempp-Hirth K.G. Models Standard-Cirrus, Nimbus-2, Nimbus-2B, Mini-Nimbus HS–7, Mini-Nimbus B, Discus a, and Discus b Sailplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to certain Schempp-Hirth K.G. (Schempp-Hirth) Models Standard-Cirrus, Nimbus-2, Nimbus-2B, Mini-Nimbus HS–7, Mini-Nimbus B, Discus a, and Discus b sailplanes. The proposed action would require accomplishing a load test of the elevator control system, and replacing the elevator vertical actuating tube either immediately or at a certain time period depending on the results of the load test. The proposed action results from reported incidents of corrosion found in the elevator because of water entering the elevator control rod. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent corrosion in the elevator caused by water entering the elevator control rod, which could result in elevator failure and subsequent loss of control of the sailplane.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before January 17, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96–CE–19–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. Comments may be inspected at this location between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted.

Service information that applies to the proposed AD may be obtained from Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH, Krebenstrasse 25, Postfach 1443, D–73230 Kircheim/Teck, Germany. This information also may be examined at the Rules Docket at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. J. Mike Kiesov, Project Officer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone (816) 426–6932; facsimile (816) 426–2169.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket No. 96–CE–19–AD.'' The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96–CE–19–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Discussion

The Luftfahrt-Bundesamt (LBA), which is the airworthiness authority for Germany, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Schempp-Hirth Models Standard-Cirrus, Nimbus-2, Nimbus-2B, Mini-Nimbus HS–7, Mini-Nimbus B, Discus a, and Discus b sailplanes. The LBA reports several incidents of corrosion found in the elevator because of water entering the elevator control rod. This condition, if not detected and corrected, could result in elevator failure and subsequent loss of control of the sailplane.

Applicable Service Information

Schempp-Hirth Technical Note No. 278–33, 286–28, 295–22, 328–10, 349–16, 360–9, 373–5, dated November 19, 1992, specifies procedures for accomplishing a load test of the elevator control system, and replacing the elevator vertical actuating tube. This technical note also includes an appendix that includes additional procedures for accomplishing the above actions.

The LBA classified this technical note as mandatory and issued LBA AD 92–360, dated January 8, 1993, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these sailplanes in Germany.

The FAA's Determination

This sailplane model is manufactured in Germany and is 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. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the LBA has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the LBA; reviewed all available information, including the technical note referenced above; and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of the Provisions of the Proposed AD

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop in other Schempp-Hirth Models Standard-Cirrus, Nimbus-2, Nimbus-2B, Mini-Nimbus HS–7, Mini-Nimbus B, Discus a, and Discus b sailplanes of the same type design, the proposed AD would require accomplishing a load test of the elevator control system, and replacing the elevator vertical actuating tube either immediately or at a certain time period depending on the results of the load test. Accomplishment of the proposed actions would be in

accordance with Schempp-Hirth Technical Note No. 278–33, 286–28, 295–22, 328–10, 349–16, 360–9, 373–5, dated November 19, 1992, and the Appendix to this technical note.

Compliance Time of the Proposed AD

The compliance time of the proposed replacement of this NPRM is presented in calendar time instead of hours time-in-service. The FAA has determined that a calendar time for compliance would be the most desirable method because the unsafe condition of the elevator control system is caused by corrosion. Corrosion can occur in the areas of the elevator control system of the affected sailplanes regardless of whether the sailplane is in service.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 167 sailplanes in the U.S. registry would be affected by the proposed AD, that it would take approximately 3 workhours per sailplane to accomplish the proposed replacement, and that the average labor rate is approximately $60 an hour. Parts cost approximately $40 per sailplane. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. sailplane operators is estimated to be $36,740. This figure is based on the assumption that no owner/operator of the affected sailplanes has accomplished the proposed replacement.

Schempp-Hirth has informed the FAA that parts have been distributed to equip approximately 53 sailplanes. Assuming that each set of parts is incorporated on an affected sailplane, the cost impact upon U.S. sailplane owners/operators would be reduced by $11,660 from $36,740 to $25,080.

In addition, the above figure is based only on the replacement costs; it does not take into account the costs of the load test. An owner/operator of an affected sailplane is allowed to accomplish this load test so the only cost involved is the time it takes the owner/operator to accomplish this test.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (1) is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a ''significant rule'' under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action has been placed in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES.**

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

Schempp-Hirth K.G.: Docket No. 96–CE–19–AD.

Applicability: The following sailplane models and serial numbers, certificated in any category:

Models	Serial Nos.
Standard-Cirrus	All serial numbers.
Nimbus-2 and Nimbus-2B.	All serial numbers.
Mini-Nimbus HS–7 and Mini-Nimbus B.	Serial numbers 1 to 159.
Discus a and Discus b.	Serial numbers 1 to 446.

Note 1: This AD applies to each sailplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For sailplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (f) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated in the body of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent corrosion in the elevator caused by water entering the elevator control rod, which could result in elevator failure and subsequent loss of control of the sailplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to further flight after the effective date of this AD, accomplish a load test of the elevator control system in accordance with Schempp-Hirth Technical Note No. 278–33, 286–28, 295–22, 328–10, 349–16, 360–9, 373–5, dated November 19, 1992, and the Appendix to this technical note.

Note 2: Sections 61.107(d)(1) and 61.127(d)(1) of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 61.107(d)(1) and 14 CFR 61.127(d)(1)) give the authorization for glider/sailplane operators to disassemble and reassemble the elevator control system (for storage purposes between flights). The ''prior to further flight after the effective date of this AD'' compliance time in paragraph (a) of this AD was established to coincide with the next reassembly of the elevator control system.

(b) If any discrepancies are found during the load test required by paragraph (a) of this AD, prior to further flight, replace the elevator vertical actuating tube in accordance with Schempp-Hirth Technical Note No. 278–33, 286–28, 295–22, 328–10, 349–16, 360–9, 373–5, dated November 19, 1992, and the Appendix to this technical note.

(c) Within the next six calendar months after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished (compliance with paragraph (b) of this AD), replace the elevator vertical actuating tube in accordance with Schempp-Hirth Technical Note No. 278–33, 286–28, 295–22, 328–10, 349–16, 360–9, 373–5, dated November 19, 1992, and the Appendix to this technical note.

(d) The elevator control system load test as required by paragraph (a) of this AD may be performed by the sailplane owner/operator holding at least a private pilot certificate as authorized by section 43.7 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 43.7), and must be entered into the aircraft records showing compliance with this AD in accordance with section 43.11 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 43.11).

(e) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the sailplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(f) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance times that provides an equivalent level of safety may be approved by the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate.

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Small Airplane Directorate.

(g) All persons affected by this directive may obtain copies of the documents referred to herein upon request to Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH, Krebenstrasse 25, Postfach 1443, D–73230 Kircheim/Teck, Germany; or may examine these documents at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 29, 1996.

John R. Colomy,

Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 96–28320 Filed 11–4–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96–NM–107–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Airbus Model A300 series airplanes. This proposal would require a one-time template inspection of the rear pressure bulkhead to detect dents; repetitive eddy current inspections of dents greater than a certain depth to detect cracking; and repair, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by a report indicating that cracking has been found in the vicinity of a dent in the rear pressure bulkhead of one airplane. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent fatigue cracking resulting from a dent in the rear pressure bulkhead, which if uncorrected, could reduce the structural integrity of the bulkhead, and consequently lead to rapid depressurization of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by December 16, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96–NM–107–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tim Backman, Aerospace Engineer, Standardization Branch, ANM–113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (206) 227–2797; fax (206) 227–1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket Number 96–NM–107–AD.'' The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96–NM–107–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Airbus Model A300 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that it has received a report indicating that cracking caused by fatigue has been detected in the vicinity of a dent in the rear pressure bulkhead of a Model A300 series airplane; the cause of the denting has not yet been ascertained, however. Due to the force required to dent the rear pressure bulkhead, it is likely the dent did not occur while the airplane was in service, but could have resulted from a shipping accident prior to installation of the bulkhead, or from procedures used to install the bulkhead on the airplane. Furthermore, it is not known if this denting is strictly an isolated occurrence or if it could affect other Model A300 series airplanes. What is known, however, is that denting in this area can lead to cracking which, if not corrected, could reduce the structural integrity of the rear pressure bulkhead, and consequently lead to rapid depressurization of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin No. A300–53–302, dated November 3, 1995, which describes procedures for conducting a one-time template inspection of the rear pressure bulkhead to detect dents; conducting repetitive eddy current inspections of dents greater than a certain depth to detect fatigue cracking; and repair, if necessary.

Depending on the extent and location of the cracking, the service bulletin, in some circumstances, provides for continued flight without immediate repair of the damaged area; temporary and permanent repairs, however, are to be performed eventually. In other situations, the service bulletin instructions recommend the installation of a permanent repair to be performed prior to further flight. The accomplishment of this permanent repair procedure eliminates the need for repetitive eddy current inspections and temporary repair.

The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive (CN) 95–245–192(B), dated December 6, 1995, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in France and is 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. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the