

flight cycles after the effective date of this AD.

(2) For airplanes that have accumulated less than 20,000 total flight cycles as of the effective date of this AD: Inspect prior to the accumulation of 18,000 total flight cycles, or within 1,500 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(c) If any crack is detected during any inspection required by this AD, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

(d) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116.

**Note 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(e) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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.

**Note 3:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive (CN) 97-274-230(B), dated September 24, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on November 18, 1997.

**Stewart R. Miller,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-30858 Filed 11-24-97; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-CE-78-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Aeromot-Industria Mecanico Metalurgica Ltda. Models AMT-100 and AMT-200 Powered Gliders**

**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 Aeromot-Industria Mecanico Metalurgica Ltda. (Aeromot) Models AMT-100 and AMT-200 powered gliders. The proposed action would

require replacing all main landing gear attaching nuts and bolts with ones of improved design. The proposed AD is the result of mandatory continued airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for Brazil. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the main landing gear, which could cause loss of control of the sailplane during landing operations.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before December 26, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-CE-78-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 Grupo Aeromot, Aeromot-Industria Mecanico Metalurgica Ltda., Av. das Industrias-1210, Bairro Anchieta, Caixa Postal 8031, 90200-Porto Alegre-RS, Brazil. This information also may be examined at the Rules Docket at the address above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Curtis Jackson, Aerospace Engineer, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix Blvd., suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia 30349; telephone (770) 703-6083; facsimile (770) 703-6097.

#### **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. 97-CE-78-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 Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-CE-78-AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

##### **Discussion**

The Centro Tecnico Aeroespacial (CTA), which is the airworthiness authority for Brazil, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Aeromot Models AMT-100 and AMT-200 powered gliders. The CTA reports that the main landing gear on two powered gliders failed. The failure is the result of hard landings shearing the attaching bolts and causing collapse of the main landing gear. After further investigation, the manufacturer has determined that these bolts (part numbers (P/N) TH 6x30 PL11) and nuts (P/N 6PA-108) may have intergranular defects and the design is not adequate to withstand a very hard landing. These conditions, if not corrected, could result in loss of the main landing gear during landing operations.

##### **Relevant Service Information**

Aeromot has issued Service Bulletin (SB) No. SB-200-32-044, Issue Date August 18, 1997, which specifies procedures for removing the original attaching bolts and nuts, and installing attaching bolts and nuts of an improved design.

The CTA classified these service bulletins as mandatory and issued Brazilian AD 97-09-06, dated August 14, 1997, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in Brazil.

##### **The FAA's Determination**

This airplane model is manufactured in Brazil 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 CTA has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA

has examined the findings of the CTA; reviewed all available information, including the service information 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 Aeromot Models AMT-100 and AMT-200 powered gliders of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require replacing all main landing gear attaching bolts and nuts with attaching bolts and nuts of improved design. Accomplishment of the proposed action would be in accordance with Aeromot SB No. SB-200-32-044, Issue Date August 18, 1997.

### Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 18 powered gliders in the U.S. registry would be affected by the proposed AD, that it would take approximately 1 workhour per powered glider to accomplish the proposed action, and that the average labor rate is approximately \$60 an hour. Parts are provided by the manufacturer at no cost. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$1,080 for the fleet or \$60 per glider.

### Compliance Time

The compliance time of the proposed AD is in calendar time instead of hours time-in-service (TIS). The average monthly usage of the affected glider ranges throughout the fleet. For example, one owner may operate the glider 25 hours TIS in one week, while another operator may operate the glider 25 hours TIS in one year. In order to ensure that all of the owners/operators of the affected gliders have replaced the attaching bolts and nuts on the main landing gear within a reasonable amount of time, the FAA is proposing a compliance time of 30 calendar days.

### 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:

#### **Aeromot-Industria Mecanico Metalurgica LTDA:** Docket No. 97-CE-78-AD.

**Applicability:** Model AMT-100 powered gliders (serial numbers (S/N) 100.001 through 100.039 and 100.041 through 100.044) and Model AMT-200 powered gliders (S/N 200.040 and 200.045 through 200.080), certificated in any category.

**Note 1:** This AD applies to each glider 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 gliders 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 (c) 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 within the next 30 calendar days after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent failure of the main landing gear, which could cause loss of control of the

sailplane during landing operations, accomplish the following:

(a) Replace all main landing gear attaching bolts (part number (P/N) TH 6x30 PL11 or an FAA-approved equivalent part number) and nuts (P/N 6 PA-108 or an FAA-approved equivalent part number) with attaching bolts (P/N DIN 931 M6x30 (Pitch 1.0) Class 10.9 or an FAA-approved equivalent part number) and nuts (P/N DIN 982 M6 (Pitch 1.0) or an FAA-approved equivalent part number) in accordance with the Procedures section in AEROMOT-IND. MECANICO-METALURGICA LTDA. Service Bulletin No. SB-200-32-044, Issue Date August 18, 1997.

(b) 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 glider to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an equivalent level of safety may be approved by the Manager, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix Blvd., suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia 30349. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office.

**Note 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office.

(d) All persons affected by this directive may obtain copies of this document referred to herein upon request to Grupo Aeromot, Aeromot-Industria Mecanico Metalurgica Ltda., Av. das Industrias-1210, Bairro Anchieta, Caixa Postal 8031, 90200-Porto Alegre-RS, Brazil; or may examine these documents at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

**Note 3:** The subject of this AD addresses Brazilian CTA AD 97-09-06, dated August 14, 1997.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on November 17, 1997.

**Larry E. Werth,**

*Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-138-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

### Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747-400 Series Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.