[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2025-1362; Project Identifier MCAI-2025-00062-G; Amendment 39-23253; AD 2026-03-04]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH Gliders

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH (Schempp-Hirth) Model STANDARD CIRRUS gliders. This AD was prompted by reports of a broken outer race of the lower ball bearing installed in the all-moving horizontal tailplane drive fitting. This AD requires inspecting the elevator drive fitting to determine the type of lower ball bearing installed, and depending upon the results, replacing the lower ball bearing with a serviceable part. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES:

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2025-1362; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the

mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

• For SCHEMPP-HIRTH Flugzeugbau GmbH material identified in this AD, contact Schempp-Hirth, Krebenstraße 25, 73230 Kirchheim unter Teck, Germany; phone: +49 7021 7298-0; email: info@schempp-hirth.com; website: schempp-hirth.com.

• You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 901 Locust, Kansas City, MO 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110. It is also available at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2025-1362.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Schmitt, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (206) 231-3377; email: peter.a.schmitt@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Schempp-Hirth Model CIRRUS gliders. The NPRM was published in the *Federal Register* on July 22, 2025 (90 FR 34391). The NPRM was prompted by EASA AD 2024-0242R1, dated January 17, 2025, issued by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union (EASA AD 2024-0242R1) (also referred to as the MCAI). The MCAI states that occurrences were reported of a broken outer race in the lower ball bearing installed on the all-moving horizontal tailplane drive fitting. This

condition, if not addressed, could lead to the tailplane drive jamming and loss of control of the glider.

In the NPRM, the FAA proposed to require inspecting the elevator drive fitting to determine the type of lower ball bearing installed, and depending upon the results, replacing the lower ball bearing with a serviceable part. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

The FAA issued a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking (SNPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Schempp-Hirth Model STANDARD CIRRUS gliders. The SNPRM was published in the *Federal Register* on November 28, 2025 (90 FR 54593). The SNPRM was prompted by a comment received on the NPRM from an individual commenter noting that the NPRM referenced the incorrect glider model. In the SNPRM, the FAA proposed to require the same actions as those proposed in the NPRM, and updated the reference to the affected Schempp-Hirth glider model from CIRRUS to STANDARD CIRRUS. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2025-1362.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA received no comments on the SNPRM or on the determination of the costs.

Conclusion

These products have been approved by the civil aviation authority of another country and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, that authority has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA

reviewed the relevant data, considered any comments received, and determined that air safety requires adopting this AD as proposed. Accordingly, the FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products. Except for minor editorial changes, this AD is adopted as proposed in the SNPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator.

Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed SCHEMPP-HIRTH Flugzeugbau GmbH Technical Note No. 278-25, Revision 1, dated July 9, 2024, which specifies procedures for inspecting the elevator drive fitting to determine which type of lower ball bearing is installed, and depending on the results, replacing the lower ball bearing with a serviceable part. This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 17 gliders of U.S. registry.

The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated costs

Action	Labor Cost	Parts Cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspect elevator drive fitting or records review to determine if affected part is installed	1 work-hour x $85 per hour = $85	$0	$85	$1,445

The FAA estimates the following costs to do any necessary replacements that would be required based on the results of the inspection. The agency has no way of determining the number of gliders that might need these replacements:

On-condition costs

Action	Labor Cost	Parts Cost	Cost per product
Replace elevator drive lower ball bearing	1 work-hour x $85 per hour = $85	$35	$120

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

(1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(3) 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.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

2026-03-04 Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH: Amendment 39-23253; Docket No. FAA-2025-1362; Project Identifier MCAI-2025-00062-G.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH Model STANDARD CIRRUS gliders, serial numbers 21, 23, 27, 30, 32, 33, 34, 36 through 52, and 54 through 120, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code 5520, Elevator Structure.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of a broken outer race component of the lower ball bearing installed in the all-moving horizontal tailplane drive fitting. The FAA is

issuing this AD to address this unsafe condition. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in the tailplane drive jamming and loss of control of the glider.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Definitions

For the purpose of this AD, the definitions in paragraphs (g)(1) and (2) of this AD apply.

(1) An "affected part" is as identified in SCHEMPP-HIRTH Flugzeugbau GmbH Technical Note No. 278-25, Revision 1, dated July 9, 2024 (SCHEMPP-HIRTH TN No. 278-25, Revision 1): EL6 lower ball bearing (identified as type 1a) or self-aligning lower ball bearing (identified as type 1b) of the elevator drive fitting.

(2) A "serviceable part" is as identified in SCHEMPP-HIRTH TN No. 278-25, Revision 1: Lower bearing ring with inner bronze bushing having part number HS4-30.013/1 (identified as type 1d).

(h) Required Actions

(1) Within 4 months after the effective date of this AD, inspect the elevator drive fitting to determine if an affected part is installed, in accordance with the instructions of Actions 1. in SCHEMPP-HIRTH TN No. 278-25, Revision 1. A review of glider maintenance records instead of this inspection is acceptable provided it can be conclusively determined from that review if an affected part is installed.

(2) If, during the inspection or maintenance records review required by paragraph (h)(1) of this AD, it is determined that an affected part is installed, within 4 months after the effective date of this AD, replace the affected part with a serviceable part in accordance with the instructions of Actions 2. of SCHEMPP-HIRTH TN No. 278-25, Revision 1.

(i) Parts Installation Prohibition

As of the effective date of this AD, do not install an affected part as defined in paragraph (g)(1) of this AD on any glider.

(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

The Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) of this AD and email to: AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(k) Additional Information

For more information about this AD, contact Peter Schmitt, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (206) 231-3377; email: peter.a.schmitt@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the material listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this material as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) SCHEMPP-HIRTH Flugzeugbau GmbH Technical Note No. 278-25, Revision 1, dated July 9, 2024.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For SCHEMPP-HIRTH Flugzeugbau GmbH material identified in this AD, contact Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH**,** Krebenstraße 25, 73230 Kirchheim unter Teck, Germany; phone: +49 7021 7298-0**;** email: info@schempp-hirth.com; website: schempp-hirth.com.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 901 Locust, Kansas City, MO 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110.

(5) You may view this material at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, visit www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations or email fr.inspection@nara.gov.

Issued on January 28, 2026.

Steven W. Thompson,
Acting Deputy Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.
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