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*The Gliding
Federation of
Australia Inc.*



AIRWORTHINESS SAFETY ALERT
ASA No. 01/13
8th OCTOBER 13

CANCELLED 19/10/2022 – Refer AD678

MODELS AFFECTED:

Schempp - Hirth Std Cirrus (15 meter - all variants)
Schempp - Hirth Nimbus 2 (A and B Models)

And possibly Mini-Nimbus models and Janus A models also.

NATURE OF ALERT:

Increased risk of flutter and poor security of tailplane

DETAILS:

Investigations into loose tailplane attaching bolts on the 5th and 6th of October have discovered that due to very dry conditions experienced in Australia recently, the wooden tailplane spars have shrunk slightly allowing the attaching bolts that mount the tailplane to the fuselage to become loose. The bolts are retained by nuts at the rear of the spar however these are not captivated and spin freely. Access to these nuts is not possible without cutting holes in the fibreglass. This prevents the bolts from being torqued to the correct specifications.

Schempp – Hirth have two different methods of attaching tailplanes in this generation of sailplane, and both methods have been found to exhibit the same problem. Of 6 aircraft inspected (Both Cirrus and Nimbus 2) 5 were found to have this issue, with varying numbers of loose bolts. One aircraft was found to have all 8 bolts loose.

There are 8 x bolt/nut combinations that affix the tailplane to the fuselage. Both methods are shown below in Figures 1 and 2 on page 2 of this alert.

IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED:

To allow the GFA sufficient time to develop an Airworthiness Directive to resolve this issue in the long term, the following mandatory action is required before next flight:

1. A GFA 'Form 2' authorised FRP Annual Inspector is to remove the tailplane and inspect the attaching bolts for security. If more than two bolts are found to be loose the aircraft is rendered un-airworthy and a Major Defect is to be placed in the Maintenance Release of the aircraft. If two adjacent bolts (in any combination of 1-4 in the photos) are loose the aircraft is also rendered un-airworthy.
2. If no loose bolts are discovered, an entry in the Minor Defects section is required to alert pilots that this inspection has been conducted and that a Safety Alert has been raised for the aircraft. Subsequent inspections are required in accordance with item 1 every month until the Airworthiness Directive has been promulgated and actioned accordingly.

3. Please send a brief inspection report (email) to returns@glidingaustralia.org outlining the results of the inspection including how many bolts (if any) were loose and the status of the aircraft. This will assist the GFA in determining the scope and magnitude of impact to the affected fleet.

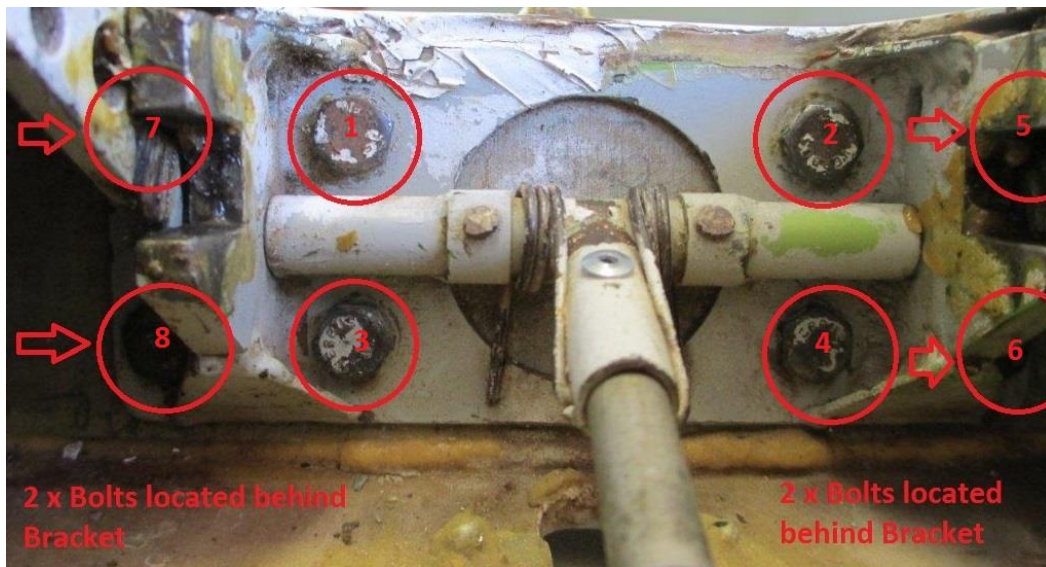


Figure 1 – Tailplane attaching style A

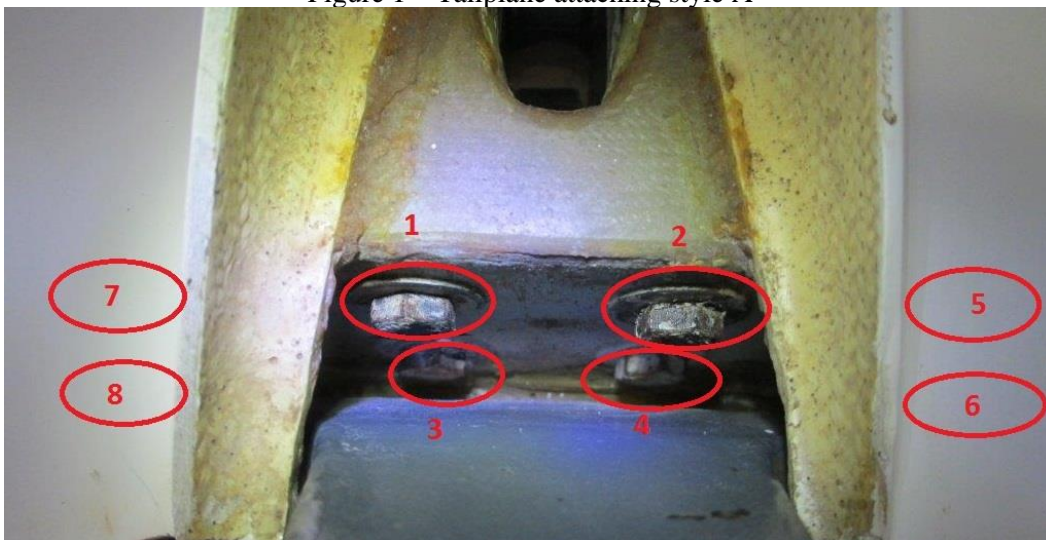


Figure 2 – Tailplane attaching style B

For further information, please contact the GFA Airworthiness Department or the Australian Schempp - Hirth agent, Maddog Composites at mike@maddogcomposites.com.au



Stuart Addinell
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Delegate of the Authority