

ULTRALIGHT AIRCRAFT AIRWORTHINESS NOTICE
15/10/2003

ALL SKYFOX AND SKYFOX GAZELLE AIRCRAFT – RUDDER PEDAL CRACKING

To: All Owners and Operators of Skyfox and Gazelle aircraft.

Background: A failure has been reported in the lug where the rudder cable attaches to the rudder pedal. On one pedal the lug detached due to complete failure of the metal in the heat affected zone near the weld while the aircraft was being taxied. Further inspection revealed that the identical area on the other lug also showed evidence of cracking.

The design of these lugs is such that considerable leverage is applied to the weld area whenever pressure is applied to the pedal against a rudder stop (i.e. during sideslipping or maneuvering the aircraft on the ground) or when pressure is applied evenly to both pedals when holding the aircraft on brakes (during engine runup for instance).

A report of bent rudder horns in these aircraft was discussed in the Technical Manager's report in the August 2001 issue of Australian Ultralights and the defect was attributed to application of excess pressure to the rudder pedals. The failure of the rudder pedal lugs could be a further manifestation of this problem.

Action Required: Before next flight and at each 100 hourly inspection the rudder pedal lugs are to be inspected for cracking in the area of the weld where the lug attaches to the rudder pedal using appropriate inspection methods. As the cracking appears on the firewall side of the rudder pedal, the engine cowls should be removed to allow sufficient light and access for the inspection.

Repair: If any cracking is found the item should be repaired before further flight.

Recording: Compliance with this Airworthiness Notice is to be recorded in the aircraft logbook along with any repairs carried out.