



Airworthiness Concern Sheet

Date: June 29, 2012

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Make, Model, Series, Serial No.:

Piper PA-18-135 Airplane, all serial numbers

Reason for Airworthiness Concern: Cracks in fuselage tail section protruding into lower rudder

FAA Description of Airworthiness Concern: During maintenance of a Piper model PA-18-135 airplane, the fuselage was disassembled and a fluorescent penetrant inspection (FPI) was performed on all high stress areas and major weld joints. Two cracks were found in the welded joint at the lowest and aft most point of the fuselage tail section, protruding toward the lower rudder hinge area. Additional x-rays showed the cracks protruding into adjacent welded areas. Four additional aircraft were inspected and two showed similar cracking. The cracks could lead to loss of integrity of the lower fuselage rudder attachment area.

Request for Information: The FAA is soliciting additional information from Associations and Type Clubs in accordance with the Small Airplane Directorate AD Manual Supplement. We are looking for related information such as in-service problems, accessibility for inspection, proposed inspection/repair procedures, safety risk, cost impact, etc. All comments or replies should be returned in writing to the FAA (address options listed above), be as detailed as possible, and include specific examples to illustrate the comments/concerns.

Attachments:

1. Risk Assessment (RA)
2. Contact List

This Airworthiness Concern Sheet (ACS) is intended as a means for FAA Aviation Safety Engineers to coordinate airworthiness concerns with aircraft owner/operators through associations and type clubs. At this time, the FAA has not made a determination on what type of corrective action (if any) should be taken. The resolution of this airworthiness concern could involve an AD action or an SAIB, or the FAA could determine that no action is needed at this time. The FAA's final determination will depend in part on the information received in response to this ACS.

The FAA endorses dissemination of this technical information to all manufacturers and requests association and type clubs comments.

Attachments: *SDR(s) ☐ *A/IDS ☐ *SL(s) ☐ *SAIB ☐ *FAASR/*NTSBSR ☐ *AD ☐ *AMOC ☐ *RA ☒

Notification: FAA ☒ *AOPA ☒ *EAA ☒ Type Club ☒ *TC Holder ☒ Other: ☐

Response Requested 7 / 31 /2012 : Emergency (10 days) ☐ Alert (30 days) ☒ Information (90 days) ☐
(Space Bar Adds "X" to Check Boxes)

Revised 1/24/02