

FLIGHT SAFETY MESSAGE

EXPRESS AIRCRAFT CO LLC

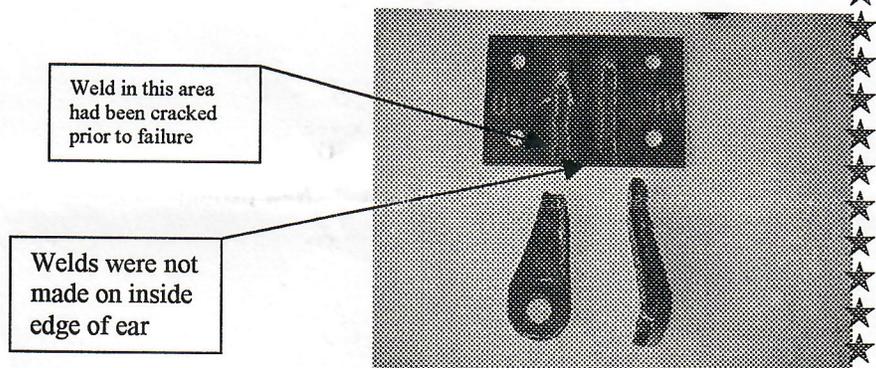
NUMBER 980001
January 31, 1998

SUBJECT: MAIN LANDING GEAR INBOARD ATTACHING BRACKET

SUMMARY OF PROBLEM

Two incidents have been reported involving failure of the main landing gear bracket (part number 115-14-004). In both cases the aircraft were equipped with the EDI steel gear and IO540 engines. One aircraft was the S90 version and the other a CT. The inboard bracket failed on landing, resulting in the inboard end of the main landing gear puncturing a hole in the lower wing skin. This allowed the wing to settle until the wheel pant came in contact with the wing. No additional damage was done to the aircraft.

Investigation indicates that the bracket is failing because of increased horizontal loads caused by the wider wheelbase of the EDI steel main landing gear and the higher gross weights, at which the aircraft is operating. In addition, an inspection of several brackets indicated less than satisfactory manufacturing procedures.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Immediate inspection of both inboard landing gear brackets for cracks in the welded areas. If the bracket installed does not have both sides of the ear welded, bracket should be replaced immediately.
2. Follow-up inspections should be conducted in 10 hour intervals and after every incident of hard braking.
3. Bracket should be replaced immediately if any defect is found or during the next scheduled condition inspection, which ever occurs first.

Replacement brackets are available. These brackets have additional gussets to absorb the increased horizontal loads and are normalized and heat treated. For additional information contact Larry Olson, Express Aircraft Co. (360) 352-3554.

NOTE: This advisory does not apply to aircraft with Express Aircraft Company LLC Fiberglass Landing Gear installed.