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EASA Major change approval for certified sailplanes with Front Electric Sustainer

European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) released the “Major change approval 10063863” for the Front Electric Sustainer system (FES) on certified sailplanes. LZ Design d.o.o., in accordance with EASA, modified both hardware and software with additional features to improve safety during the whole life of the product. These modifications allow all EASA certificated FES sailplanes to be back in the air using FES and batteries. Our current production of FES sailplanes (Discus and Ventus lines) already complies with this updated design. For FES sailplanes currently under permit to fly, a new official release will follow shortly.

Investigations from both AAIB (Air Accident Investigation Branch, UK), in accordance with EASA, and LZ Design d.o.o., conducted EASA to release a Major change approval for FES certified sailplanes: Schempp-Hirth Discus FES and Ventus FES (EASA.A.050 original type certificate number)

This “Major change approval 10063863” states that:

The safety of the FES-system, especially in regards of the FES-batteries, is improved by the following modifications:

- a) *An additional fire warning system is installed, which gives independently from the FES-system a warning of a possible fire when excessive temperatures are detected in the battery compartment*
- b) *In the Flight Manual and in the Maintenance Manual the following changes are introduced.*
 - *Description of the additionally introduced fire warning system*
 - *Amendments for the handling and transport of the FES-batteries outside of the aircraft (SHK notes: with a special transport box to prevent mechanical damages during ground handling)*
 - *Introduction of a rescue card*
 - *Other amendments and corrections*
- c) *Among other things, the FES batteries are modified with (...):*
 - *a reinforced housing (SHK notes: in glassfiber, in place of the carbonfiber one, for better shock absorbing, better stability (electrical insulation) and better temperature resistance (high temperature resin)*
- d) *A safety valve is installed in the battery compartment cover.*

e) *The warning messages displayed by the FCU instrument are improved.*

The modification bulletin 863-13 describes all the modifications to be performed to comply with this “Major change approval 10063863”:

- *Installation of a fire warning system.*
- *Revision of Flight Manual and Maintenance Manual.*
- *Modification of FES-batteries.*
- *Modification of the battery compartment cover (SHK notes: valve system).*
- *Update of the FCU instrument (SHK notes: update software to v3.06).*

A similar Technical Note will be released shortly for all FES Schempp-Hirth sailplanes flying currently under Permit to Fly in accordance with LBA.

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