



Safety Information Bulletin

Airworthiness

SIB No.: 2017-17

Issued: 17 October 2017

Subject: Kobe Steel Ltd. Material – Falsified Inspection Data

Publication:

Press Releases by Kobe Steel Ltd., dated [08 October 2017](#) and [13 October 2017](#) on non-conforming materials.

Applicability:

Design, production and repair approval holders of certified products (see Note 1 of this SIB), parts or appliances, and components thereof, using materials supplied by Kobe Steel.

Note 1: Products are aircraft, engines and propellers. Kobe Steel Ltd. material used in products, parts and appliances, and components thereof are hereafter referred to as 'affected parts' in this SIB.

Description:

As reported in recent media articles, Kobe Steel Ltd., a Japanese metals producer, found that their workers have, possibly over a period of many years, fabricated the inspection data on certain parts and shipped those parts, possibly not meeting the customer's specification, to a wide range of companies manufacturing a wide range of products, parts and appliances, and components thereof.

The Japanese Authorities, including the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB), are investigating the matter in order to establish the scope and extent of the problem, regarding affected parts and customers impacted and the extent of any deviations from specifications. Several affected organisations have already been informed and have indicated they will evaluate the concern, following the normal procedures for ensuring continued airworthiness. In the meantime, this SIB is released by EASA to raise general awareness of the problem within the European aviation industry and provide initial recommendations.

Regulatory References:

Regulation (EC) [216/2008](#), Annex I, paragraph 1.a, Structures and materials, states that 'the integrity of the structure must be ensured throughout, and sufficiently beyond, the operational envelope for the aircraft, including its propulsion system, and maintained for the operational life of the aircraft.' Regulation (EU) [748/2012](#), Part 21.A.31, Type design, paragraph (a) 2., states that the type design shall consist of 'information on materials and processes and on methods of manufacture and assembly of the product necessary to ensure the conformity of the product.' Article 4(4) of Regulation (EU) [376/2014](#) tasks the Agency with the establishment of a mandatory

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reporting system. Regulation (EU) [2015/1018](#) specifies that one of the occurrences which are subject to reporting is 'the use of products, components or materials, from unknown, suspect origin, or unserviceable critical components' – suspected unapproved parts (SUP).

At this time, the safety concern described in this SIB is not considered to be an unsafe condition that would warrant Airworthiness Directive (AD) action under Regulation (EU) [748/2012](#), Part 21.A.3B.

Recommendation(s):

Until further information becomes available, allowing refinement of the scope of the problem and determination of its potential significance to safety, EASA makes the following recommendations:

- All organisations that may have specified or used Kobe Steel products should do a thorough review of their supply chains in order to identify if, and when, Kobe Steel products have been used in their product designs and fabrications.

Note 2: At this time, no definitive timescale has been identified for the period of time during which this problem has existed, so current production should be prioritised.

- In addition to informing their customers, production and repair approval holders are advised to inform their competent authority of the use of such materials, if not already known by the competent authority.
- Design approval holders are advised to establish the scope of use of affected parts in its products, paying particular attention to identifying such material usage in more critical applications, e.g. Primary Structure, Principal Structural Elements, Critical Parts and Systems. Where alternative suppliers are available, it is recommended to suspend use of Kobe Steel products until the legitimacy of the affected parts can be determined.

Contact(s):

For further information, or to submit reports of finding affected parts, contact the EASA Safety Investigation and Reporting Section, Safety Management Directorate:

E-mail: IORS@easa.europa.eu.

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