

SportCruiser

Reduction of Published Vne

A recent incident involving a SportCruiser aircraft during a routine annual air test, which led to a symmetrical overload failure of the tailplane and a failure of the aircraft's canopy, is currently under investigation by LAA Engineering.

One of the features of this incident was that, during a period of negative 'g', an unrestrained fire extinguisher left the confines of the centre console and discharged its content into the cockpit. This, in itself, might have caused sufficient distraction to cause an accident but, as it happened, the extinguisher came to rest in the pilot's footwell, temporarily jamming the rudder; the pilot, whilst slightly injured, was able to regain control.



Fig. 1. It is essential that any article carried in the cockpit of an aircraft is properly restrained. A Fire extinguisher, if carried, must be affixed by an appropriate fixing to an appropriate structure.



Fig 2. Shows the bottom surface of the SportCruiser's tailplane after suffering an in-flight structural failure.

Whilst investigations into this incident continue, LAA Engineering has reduced the Vne of all SportCruisers operating under an LAA administered Permit to Fly from 138 knots IAS to 120 knots IAS and has asked owners to placard their aircraft (and flight instruments) appropriately. Revised Operating Limitations have been issued for the type.

The Airworthiness Information Leaflet (LAA/MOD/338/018 issue 1) requiring these changes can be downloaded [HERE](#).