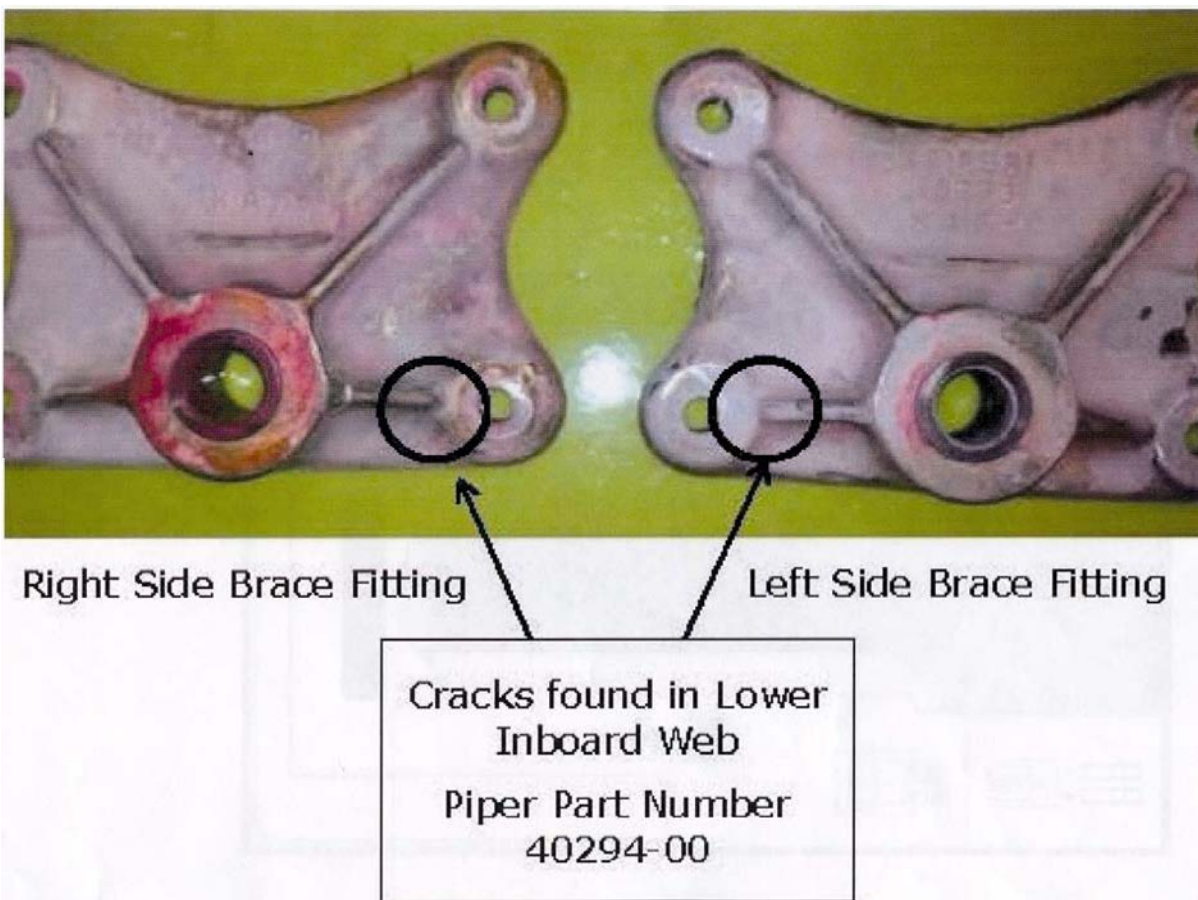


Piper PA31-350, Cracked Main Gear Fittings, ATA 3211

(A technician for an air carrier operation provides the following report. His reference can be found at: http://www.niar.twsu.edu/researchlabs/aa_overview.asp.)

Cracks in the Aft Main Gear Side Brace Fitting Assembly (P/N 40294-00). The Aging Aircraft Lab at the National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) in Wichita, Kansas recently produced a report titled, 'The Aging Airplane Study: Piper Navajo Chieftain.' Based on their findings, we initiated a dye penetrant inspection program on the forward and aft main gear Side Brace fitting assemblies on our Piper Chieftain Navajo fleet. The inspection of our aircraft revealed several of the aft fitting assemblies on both the left and right landing gear have cracks located in the lower inboard web of the Side Brace (Piper P/N 40294-00). As a result of finding these cracks, we have added a 1,000-hour Special Inspection to our PA31-350 AAIP (*Aging Airplane Inspection Program*) to monitor and replace any assemblies exhibiting the cracking found in the fitting assemblies. It is interesting to note these cracks have only been found in the aft assemblies on our aircraft."



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