[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2013-0938; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-057-AD;

Amendment 39-17852; AD 2014-11-02]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France)

(Airbus Helicopters) Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Airbus Helicopters Model SA-365N, SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and AS 365 N3 helicopters to require repetitively inspecting frame number (No.) 9 for a crack. This AD was prompted by a report of a crack in frame No. 9 on an AS365 helicopter. The actions of this AD are intended to detect a crack and prevent loss of structural integrity and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: This AD is effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain document listed in this AD as of [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus Helicopters,

Inc., 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at http://www.airbushelicopters.com/techpub. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at **http://www.regulations.gov** or in person at the Docket Operations Office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, any incorporated-by-reference service information, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations Office, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary Roach, Aviation Safety Engineer, Regulations and Policy Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137; telephone (817) 222-5110; email gary.b.roach@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

On November 6, 2013, at 78 FR 66668, the Federal Register published our notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM), which proposed to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to Eurocopter (now Airbus Helicopters) Model SA-365N, SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and AS 365 N3 helicopters. The NPRM proposed to require, for helicopters that have a No. 9 frame that has had any repair or alteration made, within 10

hours time-in-service (TIS) and every 110 hours TIS thereafter, inspecting the left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) frame No. 9 for a crack in the areas of the latch support and stretcher support with a 10X or higher power magnifying glass. For all other helicopters, the NPRM proposed to require the inspection within 110 hours TIS and every 110 hours TIS thereafter. If there is a crack, the NPRM proposed to require, before further flight, repairing the crack. The proposed requirements were intended to detect a crack and prevent loss of structural integrity and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

The NPRM was prompted by AD No. 2012-0108-E, dated June 15, 2012 (AD 2012-0108-E), issued by EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, to correct an unsafe condition for Eurocopter Model SA 365 N, SA 365 N1, AS 365 N2, and AS 365 N3 helicopters with a frame No. 9 installed, if certain "doublers or repairs have been installed." EASA advises that a crack discovered during the "T" inspection of a Model AS365 helicopter started at a rivet hole of a doubler installed on the frame No. 9 in accordance with Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) No. 53.00.42, dated January 31, 2001. EASA further states that structural alteration of frame No. 9 by modifications or repairs can result in fatigue crack initiation under normal operational loads. According to EASA, this condition, if not corrected, could lead to crack propagation and failure of frame No. 9, which would adversely affect the structural integrity of the helicopter. For these reasons, AD 2012-0108-E requires repetitive inspections of frame No. 9 for a crack in the area of the doubler or any repair performed in the area of the latch support and stretcher support.

Since we issued the NPRM, Eurocopter France has changed its name to Airbus Helicopters. This AD reflects that change and updates the contact information to obtain service documentation.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD, but we did not receive any comments on the NPRM (78 FR 66668, November 6, 2013).

FAA's Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of France and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with France, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in the EASA AD. We are issuing this AD because we evaluated all information provided by EASA and determined the unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of these same type designs and that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD requirements as proposed except for the minor change previously described. This change is consistent with the intent of the proposals in the NPRM (78 FR 66668, November 6, 2013) and will not increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

Differences Between this AD and the EASA AD

The EASA AD requires contacting Eurocopter (now Airbus Helicopters) for repair instructions if there is a crack, and this AD does not. This AD applies to all Model 365 helicopters, not just those that were altered or repaired in accordance with specific Eurocopter modifications (MODs).

Related Service Information

Eurocopter issued one Emergency ASB (EASB) with two numbers: EASB No. 05.00.63, Revision 1, dated June 18, 2012, for Model AS365 helicopters and EASB No. 05.00.30, Revision 1, dated June 18, 2012, for Model AS565 helicopters. The EASB applies to helicopters with a frame No. 9 that has not been modified by MOD 07 53C17 or MOD 07 53D02, and that has had doublers installed or repairs performed in accordance with certain service instructions. The EASB describes procedures to inspect the frame No. 9 for a crack, and for contacting Eurocopter for further procedures if there is a crack.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 37 helicopters of U.S. Registry. We estimate that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD. At an average labor rate of $85 per work-hour, inspecting LH and RH frame No. 9 will require about 3 work-hours, for a cost per helicopter of $255 and a total cost to U.S. operators of $9,435 per inspection cycle. Repairing a cracked frame No. 9 will require about 20 work-hours, and required parts will cost about $10,000, for a cost per helicopter of $11,700.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: "General requirements." Under that section, Congress

charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on helicopters identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

(1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866;

(2) Is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);

(3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and

(4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

2014-11-02 **Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France):** Amendment 39-17852; Docket No. FAA-2013-0938; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-057-AD.

(a) Applicability

This AD applies to Model SA-365N, SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and AS 365 N3 helicopters, certificated in any category.

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as a crack in frame number (No.) 9, which could result in failure of frame No. 9, loss of structural integrity, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

(c) Effective Date

This AD becomes effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

(e) Required Actions

(1) For helicopters that have any repair or alteration to the frame No. 9, within 10 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 110 hours TIS, using a 10X or higher power magnifying glass, inspect the left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) frame No. 9 for a crack in the area of the latch support and stretcher support, as depicted in Figure 1 of Eurocopter Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05.00.63, Revision 1, dated June 18, 2012.

(2) For all other helicopters, within 110 hours TIS and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 110 hours TIS, perform the inspection in paragraph (e)(1) of this AD.

(3) If there is a crack, before further flight, repair the frame No. 9. Repairing a frame is not terminating action for the repetitive inspections required by paragraphs (e)(1) and (e)(2) of this AD.

(f) Special Flight Permits

Special flight permits may be issued for up to 10 hours TIS and a maximum crack length of 80 mm.

(g) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Group, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Gary Roach, Aviation Safety Engineer, Regulations and Policy Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137; telephone (817) 222-5110; email gary.b.roach@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office, before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

(h) Additional Information

The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Emergency AD No. 2012-0108-E, dated June 15, 2012. You may view the EASA AD on the internet at http://www.regulations.gov in Docket number FAA-2013-0938.

(i) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 5300, Fuselage Structure (General).

(j) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Eurocopter Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05.00.63, Revision 1, dated June 18, 2012.

(ii) Reserved.

Note 1 to paragraph (j)(2): Eurocopter Emergency Alert Service Bulletin (EASB)

No. 05.00.63, Revision 1, dated June 18, 2012, is co-published as one document along with Eurocopter EASB No. 05.00.30, Revision 1, dated June 18, 2012, which is not incorporated by reference.

(3) For Eurocopter service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus Helicopters, Inc., 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at http://www.airbushelicopters.com/techpub.

(4) You may view this service information at FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call (202) 741-6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 21, 2014.

Lance T. Gant,

Acting Directorate Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2014-12721 Filed 06/09/2014 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 06/10/2014]