



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2016-6436; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-037-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (Airbus Helicopters) Model MBB-BK117 C-2 helicopters. This proposed AD would require inspecting the pilot collective wiring harness. This proposed AD is prompted by a report that a heat-shrinkable sleeve prevented the twist grip on the collective from being fully engaged during a flight test. The proposed actions are intended to prevent failure of the hoist or emergency landing gear flotation systems due to chafing of wiring caused by an incorrectly installed heat-shrinkable sleeve.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Docket:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- **Fax:** 202-493-2251.

- Mail: Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2016-6436; 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 proposed AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations Office (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Airbus Helicopters, 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, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Schwab, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email george.schwab@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

Discussion

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD No. 2015-0144, dated July 21, 2015, to correct an unsafe condition for Airbus Helicopters Model MBB-BK117 C-2 helicopters, up to serial number 9708. EASA advises that, during a flight test, the pilot could not fully engage a twist grip on a Model MBB-BK117 C-2 helicopter. According to EASA, further investigation found a transparent sleeve on the collective lever wiring harness damaged

because of incorrect installation of the heat-shrinkable sleeve. This condition, if not detected and corrected, could result in chafing of the harness, leading to the malfunction of the affected systems, EASA advises. EASA consequently requires a one-time inspection of the heat-shrinkable and transparent sleeves installed on the collective lever wiring harness.

FAA's Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of Germany and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with Germany, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR part 51

We reviewed Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin ASB MBB-BK117 C-2-88A-010, Revision 1, dated April 16, 2015 (ASB), which specifies a visual inspection of the heat-shrinkable sleeve for correct position. If the sleeve's position is incorrect, the ASB specifies shortening the sleeve. If there is any damage, the ASB calls for replacing the damaged parts.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require, within 100 hours time-in-service, visually inspecting the pilot collective wiring harness for correct position of the heat-shrinkable sleeve and the transparent sleeve. If the heat-shrinkable and the transparent sleeves are in their correct positions, this proposed AD would require re-installing the collective lever. If the heat-shrinkable sleeve is closer to or below the torque tube tangs, this proposed AD would require shortening the heat-shrinkable sleeve. If the transparent sleeve is damaged, this proposed AD would require replacing the heat-shrinkable sleeve, transparent sleeve, and identification sleeve. Lastly, this proposed AD would require replacing any damaged wires in the wiring harness.

Differences between this Proposed AD and the TCCA AD

The compliance time in the EASA AD is based on whether the helicopter has an externally mounted hoist or emergency flotation system. This proposed AD would require compliance within 100 hours time-in-service for all applicable helicopters.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 113 helicopters of U.S. Registry and that labor costs average \$85 a work hour.

- Inspecting the pilot collective wiring harness for the correct position of the heat-shrinkable sleeve would require 1.5 work hours. No parts would be required for a total cost of \$128 per helicopter and \$14,464 for the U.S. fleet.
- Replacing or repairing the sleeves would require 5.5 work hours and parts would cost \$10, for a total cost of \$478 per helicopter.

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 products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would 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, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the 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 proposed 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.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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):

Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters: Docket No. FAA-2016-6436;
Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-037-AD.

(a) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK 117 C-2 helicopters, serial numbers 9004 through 9708, certificated in any category.

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as an incorrectly installed heat-shrinkable sleeve on the collective lever wiring harness. This condition could result in chafing of the wiring and subsequent failure of the hoist cable cutter or emergency landing gear flotation systems.

(c) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 60 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

Within 100 hours time-in-service, remove the pilot collective lever and visually inspect the pilot collective lever wiring harness for proper installation of the heat-shrinkable sleeve and transparent sleeve and for damage in accordance with paragraph 3.B.2.1 and as depicted in Figure 2 of Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin MBB-BK117 C-2-88A-010, Revision 1, dated April 16, 2015 (ASB).

(1) If the heat-shrinkable sleeve and transparent sleeve are installed as depicted in Figure 2 of the ASB and there is no damage, install the collective lever in accordance with paragraphs 3.B.2.3.a through 3.B.2.3.f of the ASB.

(2) If the heat-shrinkable sleeve or transparent sleeve is installed as depicted in Figure 3, Detail B of the ASB, alter the heat-shrinkable sleeve as depicted in Figure 3, Detail C.

(3) If the transparent sleeve is damaged as depicted in Figure 4, Detail D of the ASB, replace the heat-shrinkable sleeve, transparent sleeve, and identification sleeve. Replace any wire that has a nick, scratch, cut, or is frayed.

(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Group, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: George Schwab, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email 9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@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.

(g) Additional Information

The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2015-0144, dated July 21, 2015. You may view the EASA AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> in the AD Docket.

(h) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: Wheel/Ski/Float/Emergency
Equipment, 3246/2560.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on November 21, 2016.

Lance T. Gant,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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