Federal Aviation Administration, DOT

§ 29.965 Fuel tank tests.

(a) Each fuel tank must be able to withstand the applicable pressure tests in this section without failure or leakage. If practicable, test pressures may be applied in a manner simulating the pressure distribution in service.

(b) Each conventional metal tank, each nonmetallic tank with walls that are not supported by the rotorcraft structure, and each integral tank must be subjected to a pressure of 3.5 p.s.i. unless the pressure developed during maximum limit acceleration or emergency deceleration with a full tank exceeds this value, in which case a hydrostatic head, or equivalent test, must be applied to duplicate the acceleration loads as far as possible. However, the pressure need not exceed 3.5 p.s.i. on surfaces not exposed to the acceleration loading.

(c) Each nonmetallic tank with walls supported by the rotorcraft structure must be subjected to the following tests:

1. A pressure test of at least 2.0 p.s.i. This test may be conducted on the tank alone in conjunction with the test specified in paragraph (c)(2) of this section.

2. A pressure test, with the tank mounted in the rotorcraft structure, equal to the load developed by the reaction of the contents, with the tank full, during maximum limit acceleration or emergency deceleration. However, the pressure need not exceed 2.0 p.s.i. on surfaces faces not exposed to the acceleration loading.

(d) Each tank with large unsupported or unstiffened flat areas, or with other features whose failure or deformation could cause leakage, must be subjected to the following test or its equivalent:

1. Each complete tank assembly and its supports must be vibration tested while mounted to simulate the actual installation.

2. The tank assembly must be vibrated for 25 hours while two-thirds full of any suitable fluid. The amplitude of vibration may not be less than one thirty-second of an inch, unless otherwise substantiated.

3. The test frequency of vibration must be as follows:

(i) If no frequency of vibration resulting from any r.p.m. within the normal operating range of engine or rotor system speeds is critical, the test frequency of vibration, in number of cycles per minute, must, unless a frequency based on a more rational analysis is used, be the number obtained by averaging the maximum and minimum power-on engine speeds (r.p.m.) for reciprocating engine powered rotorcraft or 2,000 c.p.m. for turbine engine powered rotorcraft.

(ii) If only one frequency of vibration resulting from any r.p.m. within the normal operating range of engine or rotor system speeds is critical, that frequency of vibration must be the test frequency.

(iii) If more than one frequency of vibration resulting from any r.p.m. within the normal operating range of engine or rotor system speeds is critical, the most critical of these frequencies must be the test frequency.
§ 29.967 Fuel tank installation.

(a) Each fuel tank must be supported so that tank loads are not concentrated on unsupported tank surfaces. In addition—

(1) There must be pads, if necessary, to prevent chafing between each tank and its supports;

(2) The padding must be non-absorbent or treated to prevent the absorption of fuel;

(3) If flexible tank liners are used, they must be supported so that they are not required to withstand fluid loads; and

(4) Each interior surface of tank compartments must be smooth and free of projections that could cause wear of the liner, unless—

(i) There are means for protection of the liner at those points; or

(ii) The construction of the liner itself provides such protection.

(b) Any spaces adjacent to tank surfaces must be adequately ventilated to avoid accumulation of fuel or fumes in those spaces due to minor leakage. If the tank is in a sealed compartment, ventilation may be limited to drain holes that prevent clogging and that prevent excessive pressure resulting from altitude changes. If flexible tank liners are installed, the venting arrangement for the spaces between the liner and its container must maintain the proper relationship to tank vent pressures for any expected flight condition.

(c) The location of each tank must meet the requirements of §29.1185(b) and (c).

(d) No rotorcraft skin immediately adjacent to a major air outlet from the engine compartment may act as the wall of an integral tank.


§ 29.969 Fuel tank expansion space.

Each fuel tank or each group of fuel tanks with interconnected vent systems must have an expansion space of not less than 2 percent of the combined tank capacity. It must be impossible to fill the fuel tank expansion space inadvertently with the rotorcraft in the normal ground attitude.

[Amdt. 29–26, 53 FR 34217, Sept. 2, 1988]

§ 29.971 Fuel tank sump.

(a) Each fuel tank must have a sump with a capacity of not less than the greater of—

(1) 0.10 per cent of the tank capacity; or

(2) 1/16 gallon.

(b) The capacity prescribed in paragraph (a) of this section must be effective with the rotorcraft in any normal attitude, and must be located so that the sump contents cannot escape through the tank outlet opening.

(c) Each fuel tank must allow drainage of hazardous quantities of water from each part of the tank to the sump with the rotorcraft in any ground attitude to be expected in service.

(d) Each fuel tank sump must have a drain that allows complete drainage of the sump on the ground.

[Amdt. 29–26, 53 FR 34217, Sept. 2, 1988]

§ 29.973 Fuel tank filler connection.

(a) Each fuel tank filler connection must prevent the entrance of fuel into any part of the rotorcraft other than the tank itself during normal operations and must be crash resistant during a survivable impact in accordance with §29.952(c). In addition—