

Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-SW-04-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Robinson Helicopter Company Model R22 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to Robinson Helicopter Company (Robinson) Model R22 helicopters with a Lycoming O-360-J2A engine installation. This proposal would require replacing the carburetor and carburetor air temperature (CAT) gage with an improved carburetor that does not require manual leaning of the fuel/air mixture during flight, and a remarked CAT gage; and revising the Rotorcraft Flight Manual to remove the reference to leaning the engine. This proposal is prompted by a report from the Civil Aviation Authority of Great Britain that cautioned that the mixture control could inadvertently be placed in the idle cutoff position during in-flight manual leaning of the fuel/air mixture in the carburetor of the Lycoming O-360-J2A engine. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent inadvertent placement of the mixture control to the idle cutoff position during in-flight leaning of the engine, which could result in an engine shutdown and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Comments must be received by July 18, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-SW-04-AD, 2601

Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Robinson Helicopter Company, 2901 Airport Drive, Torrance, California 90505. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Elizabeth Bumann, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, Propulsion Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712, telephone (562) 627-5265, fax (562) 627-5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 97-SW-04-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-SW-04-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Discussion

This document proposes the adoption of a new AD that is applicable to Robinson Model R22 helicopters, serial numbers (S/N) 2571 through 2664. This proposal would require replacing the MA-4-5 carburetor and CAT gage, part number (P/N) C604-6, with an airworthy MA-4SPA carburetor and CAT gage, P/N A606-2; and mandating the Robinson Model R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manual (RFM) revision dated February 6, 1997 be inserted into the RFM. These revised supplements to the RFM do not provide for leaning of the carburetor mixture. This proposal is prompted by a report from the Civil Aviation Authority of Great Britain that cautioned that the mixture control could inadvertently be placed in the idle cutoff position during in-flight leaning of the O-360-J2A engine. This condition, if not corrected, could result in inadvertent placement of the mixture control to the idle cutoff position during in-flight leaning of the engine, which could result in an engine shutdown during flight and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

The FAA has reviewed Robinson Helicopter Company R22 Service Bulletin SB-82, dated March 3, 1997, and Robinson Helicopter Company KI-114 O-360 Engine Carburetor Change Kit instructions, Revision A, dated March 6, 1997, which describe procedures for removing the MA-4-5 carburetor and the CAT gage, P/N C604-6, and replacing them with an airworthy MA-4SPA carburetor and CAT gage, P/N A604-2, and revising the RFM Section 9, Supplements 7 (for Beta II) and 8 (for Mariner II) to eliminate the leaning procedure.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Robinson Model R22 helicopters of the same type design, the proposed AD would require, within 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, removing the MA-4-5 carburetor and CAT gage, P/N C604-6, replacing them with an airworthy MA-4SPA carburetor and