

modified to facilitate the handling of Walla Walla Sweet Onions.

(b) Regrading, resorting, or repacking any lot of Walla Walla Sweet Onions shall invalidate prior inspection certificates insofar as the requirements of this section are concerned. No handler shall ship Walla Walla Sweet Onions after they have been regraded, resorted, repacked, or in any other way further prepared for market, unless such onions are inspected by an authorized representative of the Federal-State Inspection Service, or such other inspection service as the Secretary shall designate: *Provided*, That such inspection requirements on regraded, resorted, or repacked Walla Walla Sweet Onions may be modified, suspended, or terminated under rules and regulations recommended by the committee, and approved by the Secretary.

(c) Upon recommendation of the committee, and approval of the Secretary, all Walla Walla Sweet Onions that are required to be inspected and certified in accordance with this section shall be identified by appropriate seals, stamps, tags, or other identification to be furnished by the committee and affixed to the containers by the handler under the direction and supervision of the Federal-State or Federal inspector, or the committee. Master containers may bear the identification instead of the individual containers within said master container.

(d) Insofar as the requirements of this section are concerned, the length of time for which an inspection certificate is valid may be established by the committee with the approval of the Secretary.

(e) When Walla Walla Sweet Onions are inspected in accordance with the requirements of this section, a copy of each inspection certificate issued shall be made available to the committee by the inspection service.

(f) The committee may enter into an agreement with the Federal and Federal-State Inspection Services with respect to the costs of the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this section, and may collect from handlers their respective pro rata shares of such costs.

The Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, submitted the following proposal:

Proposal No. 9

Make such changes as may be necessary to the order to conform with any amendment thereto that may result from the hearing.

Dated: March 25, 1998.

Enrique E. Figueroa,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 98-8434 Filed 3-31-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-SW-10-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Model 407 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 Bell Helicopter Textron Canada (BHTC) Model 407 helicopters. This proposal would require shimming the tail rotor drive system bearing supports (bearing supports). This proposal is prompted by reports of cracked bearing hangar support arms in the area of the fillet radius. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the bearing supports, which could result in excessive tail rotor drive system vibration, loss of tail rotor drive, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 1, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-SW-10-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 Bell Helicopter Textron Canada, 12,800 Rue de l'Avenir, Mirabel, Quebec JON1LO, telephone (800) 463-3036, fax (514) 433-0272. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Jurgen Priester, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Certification Office, 2601 Meacham

Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137, (817) 222-5159, fax (817) 222-5960.

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. 98-SW-10-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 Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-SW-10-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Discussion

Transport Canada, which is the airworthiness authority for Canada, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on BHTC Model 407 helicopters. Transport Canada advises that there have been some occurrences of a gap between the bearing support and the bearing hanger on the tailboom. They further advise that this situation, if not corrected, could lead to serious vibration of the tail rotor drive shaft, and eventually, to total disintegration of the shaft.

BHTC has issued Bell Helicopter Textron Alert Service Bulletin No. 407-97-7, dated February 27, 1997, which specifies a procedure for shimming

between the bearing supports and the bearing hangers on the tailboom. Transport Canada classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued AD No. CF-97-08, dated May 30, 1997, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in Canada.

This helicopter model is manufactured in Canada and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, Transport Canada has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of Transport Canada, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other BHTC Model 407 helicopters of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require shimming the bearing supports within the next 25 hours time-in-service. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

The FAA estimates that 160 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 4 work hours per helicopter to accomplish the shimming of the bearing support, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$30 per helicopter. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$43,200.

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that 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); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding a new airworthiness directive to read as follows:

Bell Helicopter Textron Canada: Docket No. 98-SW-10-AD.

Applicability: Model 407 helicopters, serial numbers 53000, 53002 through 53065, 53067, and 53069 through 53075, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopters that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must use the authority provided in paragraph (b) to request approval from the FAA. This approval may address either no action, if the current configuration eliminates the unsafe condition, or different actions necessary to address the unsafe condition described in this AD. Such a request should include an assessment of the effect of the changed configuration on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD. In no case does the presence of any modification, alteration, or repair remove any helicopter from the applicability of this AD.

Compliance: Required within 25 hours time-in-service, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent failure of the bearing supports, which could result in excessive tail rotor drive system vibration, loss of tail rotor drive, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Shim the tail rotor drive system bearing supports in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions contained in Bell Helicopter Textron Alert Service

Bulletin No. 407-97-7, dated February 27, 1997.

(b) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Rotorcraft Certification, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Rotorcraft Certification.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from Rotorcraft Certification.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the helicopter to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in Transport Canada (Canada) AD No. CF-97-08, dated May 30, 1997.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on March 24, 1998.

Eric Bries,

Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-8469 Filed 3-31-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-SW-39-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS 332C, L, and L1 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 Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Model AS 332C, L, and L1 helicopters. This proposal would require initial and repetitive inspections of the tail rotor shaft flapping hinge retainers (retainers) for cracks. This proposal is prompted by a report of high vibrations occurring on a helicopter while in service due to a cracked retainer. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect cracks on the retainers that could lead to high tail rotor vibrations, loss of tail rotor control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 1, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation