

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the rule that might suggest a need to modify the 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 that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this AD will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this rule must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 98-SW-79-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

The regulations adopted herein will 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 final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

The FAA has determined that this regulation is an emergency regulation that must be issued immediately to correct an unsafe condition in aircraft, and that it is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866. It has been determined further that this action involves an emergency regulation under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979). If it is determined that this emergency regulation otherwise would be significant under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures, a final regulatory evaluation will be prepared and placed in the Rules Docket. A copy of it, if filed, may be obtained from 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.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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 removing Amendment 39-9177 (60 FR 14619, March 20, 1995), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), Amendment 39-10991, to read as follows:

AD 99-02-02 Robinson Helicopter

Company: Amendment 39-10991. Docket No. 98-SW-79-AD. Supersedes AD 95-06-07, Amendment 39-9177, Docket No. 94-SW-22-AD, and Priority Letter AD 98-14-08, Docket No. 98-SW-30-AD.

Applicability: Model R22 helicopters, with forward flexplate (flexplate), part number (P/N) A947-1, A through D, or P/N A193-1, installed, 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 (TIS) or 15 calendar days, whichever occurs first, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent failure of the flexplate, which could result in failure of the main rotor drive system and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Remove the flexplate and replace it with an airworthy flexplate, P/N A947-1 E or F, in accordance with following:

(1) With the clutch disengaged, support the forward end of the clutch shaft, P/N A166-1, and remove the forward flexplate, P/N A947-1 or A193-1, and the intermediate flexplate, P/N A947-2 or P/N A193-2. Record any shim locations for reinstallation.

(2) Install a zero TIS forward flexplate, P/N A947-1 E or F, and any shims that were noted. Use washers, P/N AN960-516 or AN960-516L, under the nut so that 2-4 threads are exposed. Torque the fasteners.

(3) Inspect the sheave alignment.

(4) Inspect the clutch shaft, P/N A166-1, angle.

(5) Reinstall the intermediate flexplate and shim.

Note 2: Robinson R22 Maintenance Manual, Sections 1.320, 7.230, 7.240, and 7.330 pertain to paragraphs (a)(2), (a)(3), (a)(4), and (a)(5) of this AD, respectively.

Note 3: Robinson Helicopter Company R22 Service Bulletin SB-75, dated November 22, 1994, pertains to the subject of this AD.

(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, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office.

Note 4: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office.

(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.

(d) This amendment becomes effective on February 1, 1999.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on January 6, 1999.

Henry A. Armstrong,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 99-910 Filed 1-14-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-SW-55-AD; Amendment 39-11000; AD 99-02-09]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Model A109C and A109K2 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to Agusta S.p.A. Model A109C and A109K2 helicopters. This amendment requires removing the main rotor pitch link assemblies, measuring the radial play of the upper and lower spherical bearings (bearings), and replacing any unairworthy bearings. This amendment is prompted by four reports of increased vibration of the helicopters caused by wear in the bearings of the main rotor pitch change link assembly. The actions specified by this AD are intended to detect

unairworthy bearings on the pitch change link assembly and to prevent increased vibration and subsequent reduced controllability of the helicopter.

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 19, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Shep Blackman, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137, telephone (817) 222-5296, fax (817) 222-5961.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an AD that is applicable to Agusta S.p.A. Model A109C and A109K2 helicopters was published in the **Federal Register** June 5, 1998 (63 FR 30660). That action proposed removing the main rotor pitch link assemblies, measuring the radial play of the bearings, and replacing any unairworthy bearings.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were received on the proposal or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public. The FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed.

The FAA estimates that 3 helicopters of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 3 work hours per helicopter to accomplish the actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts will cost approximately \$1122 for the upper bearing and \$995 for the lower bearing per helicopter. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$6891.

The regulations herein will 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 amendment will not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this 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) 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 final evaluation has

been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy may be obtained by requesting a copy from the Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-SW-55-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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 (AD) to read as follows:

AD 99-02-09 Agusta S.p.A.: Amendment 39-11000. Docket No. 97-SW-55-AD.

Applicability: Models A109C and A109K2 helicopters, 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 (d) 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 as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent main rotor pitch change link spherical bearing axial play due to wear, which could result in an increase in the vibration level and reduced controllability of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Within the next 10 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS, remove the pitch change link assembly, part number (P/N) 109-0110-71.

(b) Measure the radial play at both the upper and lower spherical bearings. If the radial play of a bearing exceeds 0.2

millimeter, or .008 inch, replace the affected bearing with an airworthy bearing prior to further flight.

Note 2: Agusta Bollettino Technico Telegrafico No. 109-9, dated March 23, 1995, pertains to the subject of this AD.

(c) Reinstall the pitch change link assembly.

(d) 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, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Standards Staff. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Rotorcraft Standards Staff.

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Rotorcraft Standards Staff.

(e) 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.

(f) This amendment becomes effective on February 19, 1999.

Note 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Registro Aeronautico Italiano (Italy) AD's 95-082 and 95-083, both dated March 28, 1995.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on January 8, 1999.

Henry A. Armstrong,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 99-908 Filed 1-14-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-SW-37-AD; Amendment 39-10999; AD 98-17-15]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation Model S-76A, B, and C Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This document publishes in the **Federal Register** an amendment adopting Airworthiness Directive (AD) 98-17-15 which was sent previously to all known U.S. owners and operators of Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation Model S-76A, B, and C helicopters by individual letters. This AD requires, before further flight, a one-time visual inspection of the swashplate assembly uniball bearing