

AD 2000-10-07 Eurocopter Deutschland GMBH: Amendment 39-11731. Docket No. 99-SW-05-AD.

Applicability: Model EC 135 helicopters, serial numbers 0005 through 0071, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise 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 request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (e) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required within 50 hours time-in-service, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent failure of an oil cooler fan splined drive shaft (shaft), loss of oil cooling, and a subsequent engine shutdown during flight, accomplish the following:

(a) Replace each shaft, part number (P/N) L 792M3004 225, with an airworthy shaft, P/N L 792M3004 235.

(b) Re-identify the P/N on each oil cooler fan (fan) using a rubber stamp or smudge-proof paint or equivalent as follows:

(1) On the left fan, change the P/N from L 792M3004 102 to L 792M3004 103.

(2) On the right fan, change the P/N from L 792M3005 102 to L 792M3005 103.

(c) Change the P/N on the gearbox component history card or equivalent record to reflect the revised part numbers.

Note 2: Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. EC 135-79A-001, dated January 23, 1998, pertains to the subject of this AD.

(d) Replacing the shaft, re-identifying the fans, and recording this on the gearbox component history card or equivalent record constitute terminating actions for the requirements of this AD.

(e) 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, Regulations Group, 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, Regulations Group.

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

(f) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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.

(g) This amendment becomes effective on June 21, 2000.

Note 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Luftfahrt-Bundesamt (Federal Republic of

Germany) AD No. 1998-109, dated February 26, 1998.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 9, 2000.

Henry A. Armstrong,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 00-12356 Filed 5-16-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99-SW-34-AD; Amendment 39-11732; AD 2000-10-08]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and SA-366G1 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that applies to Eurocopter France Model SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and SA-366G1 helicopters and requires conducting inspections of each tail rotor blade for bonding separation, measuring the clearance between the tip of each tail rotor blade and the circumference of the air duct, and replacing the blade if necessary. This amendment is prompted by an inflight incident in which the tail rotor blades were significantly damaged due to bonding separation. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent damage to a tail rotor blade, loss of tail rotor control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 21, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Miles, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Regulations Group, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0111, telephone (817) 222-5122, 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 for Eurocopter France Model SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and SA-366G1 helicopters was published in the **Federal Register** on February 29, 2000 (65 FR 10724). That action proposed to require conducting inspections of each tail rotor blade for bonding separation, measuring the clearance between the tip of each tail rotor blade and the circumference of the air duct, and replacing the blade if necessary.

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 136 helicopters of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 1 work hour per helicopter to accomplish the required actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts will cost approximately \$1,000 per helicopter. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$144,160.

The regulations adopted herein will 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. Therefore, it is determined that this final rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action: (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under 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 of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas.

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 to read as follows:

AD 2000-10-08 Eurocopter France:

Amendment 39-11732. Docket No. 99-SW-34-AD.

Applicability: Model SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and SA-366G1 helicopters, with a tail rotor blade, part number (P/N) 365A33-2131, 365A12-0010, or 365A12-0020, all dash numbers, 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 otherwise 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 request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (f) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this

AD; and if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent damage to a tail rotor blade (blade), loss of tail rotor control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter:

(a) Within 10 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter prior to the first flight of each day, conduct the following visual inspection of each blade (see Figure 1):

(1) Zone A: If a blister is detected on the blade suction face, conduct a tapping test inspection on the whole blade for bonding separation. If bonding separation or a crack is found, replace the blade with an airworthy blade before further flight.

(2) Zone B: If a crack, wrinkling, or a blister is found, replace the blade with an airworthy blade before further flight.

(b) Within 10 hours TIS, conduct a tapping test inspection on each blade. If there is bonding separation, replace the blade with an airworthy blade before further flight.

Note 2: Revisions 5 of Eurocopter France Service Bulletins 05.09 and 05.00.17, both

dated December 18, 1998, pertain to the subject of this AD.

(c) Thereafter, at intervals not to exceed 25 hours TIS or every 50 cycles (each takeoff and landing equals 1 cycle), whichever occurs first, conduct a tapping test inspection for bonding separation on all blades with a serial number (S/N) less than 18912, and blades, P/N 365A12-0020-00 or 365A12-0020-01, with a S/N equal to or greater than 18912. If bonding separation or a crack is found, replace the blade with an airworthy blade before further flight.

(d) Thereafter, at intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS or 200 cycles, whichever occurs first, conduct a tapping test inspection for bonding separation on blades, P/N 365A12-0020-02 or 365A12-0020-03. If bonding separation or a crack is found, replace the blade with an airworthy blade before further flight.

(e) Within 10 hours TIS, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS or 200 cycles, whichever occurs first, measure the blade-to-air duct clearance. If the clearance is less than 3 mm, replace the blade with an airworthy blade before further flight.

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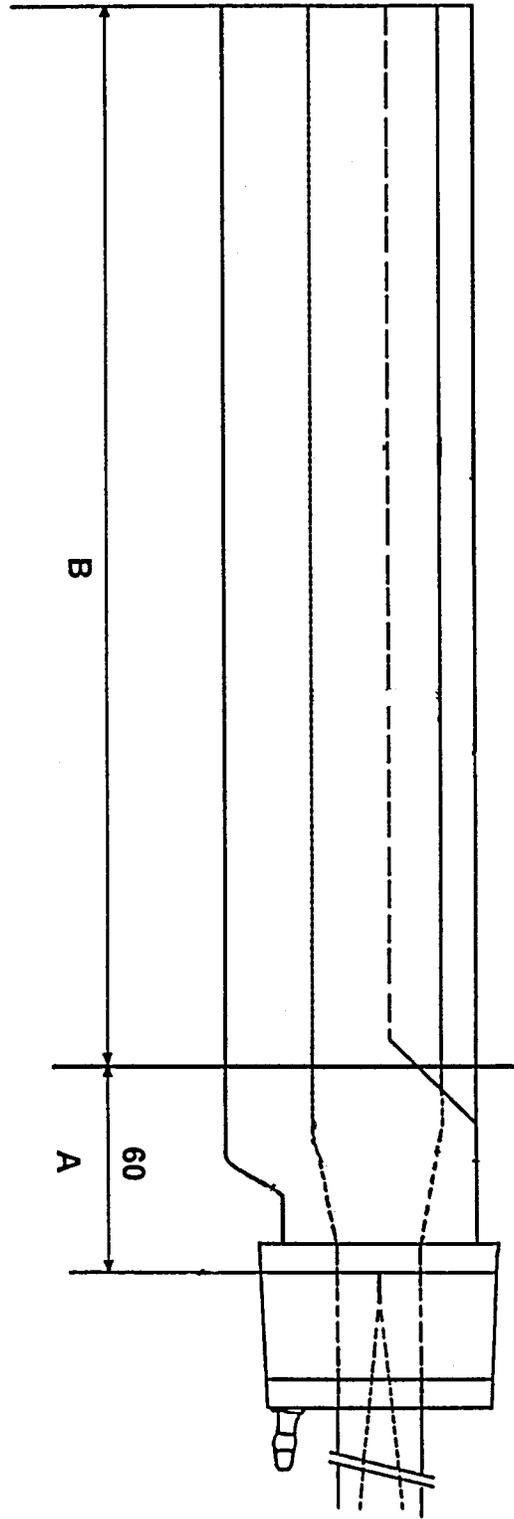


FIGURE 1

(f) 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, Regulations Group, 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, Regulations Group.

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

(g) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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.

(h) This amendment becomes effective on June 21, 2000.

Note 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile AD's 88-152-010(A)R5 and 88-153-023(A)R5, both dated December 30, 1998.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 9, 2000.

Henry A. Armstrong,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 00-12354 Filed 5-16-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2000-SW-04-AD; Amendment 39-11730; AD 2000-10-06]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters Inc. Model MD900 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) for MD Helicopters Inc. (MDHI) Model MD900 helicopters. This action requires visually inspecting the drive shaft to determine the assembly part number (P/N) and marking the drive shaft assembly P/N and serial number (S/N) on any unmarked drive shaft. This AD also requires creating a component history card or equivalent record for certain drive shaft assemblies and replacing any drive shaft assembly that has reached its life limit. This amendment is prompted by the discovery of several drive shafts with no assembly P/N marked on the part, which could result in a drive shaft

remaining in service past its life limit. The actions specified in this AD are intended to prevent failure of the drive shaft due to fatigue, which could result in total loss of drive to the main rotor hub and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Effective June 1, 2000.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before July 17, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments by mail in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2000-SW-04-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. You may also send comments electronically to the Rules Docket at the following address: 9-asw-adcomments@faa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Bumann, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, Propulsion Branch, 3960 Paramount Blvd., Lakewood, California 90712-4137, telephone (562) 627-5265, fax (562) 627-5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This amendment adopts a new AD for MDHI Model MD900 helicopters. On February 19, 1999, the FAA issued AD 99-05-08, Amendment 39-11056 (64 FR 10209, March 3, 1999), for MDHI Model MD900 helicopters to establish or reduce life limits for various parts, including the drive shaft assembly. That AD was prompted by analysis that indicated a need for establishing or reducing life limits to avoid fatigue failure of certain parts. Since issuance of that AD, several drive shaft assemblies were found without a P/N marked on the drive shafts. This could result in the drive shaft remaining in service past its life limit since operators may mistakenly use the subassembly P/N for determining whether the life limit listed in AD 99-05-08 applies. A drive shaft in operation past its life limit could fail due to fatigue. This condition, if not corrected, could result in total loss of drive to the main rotor hub and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

The FAA has reviewed MDHI Service Bulletin (SB) SB900-062 R1, dated December 16, 1999, which describes procedures for visually inspecting the drive shaft to determine the assembly P/N and marking the drive shaft assembly P/N and serial number (S/N) on any unmarked drive shaft. The SB also specifies creating component history cards for certain drive shaft assemblies, verifying the life limit, and replacing the drive shaft assembly, if necessary.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other MDHI Model MD900 helicopters of the same type design, this AD is being issued to prevent failure of the drive shaft. This AD requires visually inspecting the drive shaft to determine the assembly P/N and marking the drive shaft assembly P/N and S/N on any unmarked drive shaft. This AD also requires creating component history cards for certain drive shaft assemblies and replacing the drive shaft assembly if the drive shaft assembly has reached its life limit. The short compliance time involved is required because the previously described critical unsafe condition can adversely affect controllability of the helicopter. Therefore, the actions of this AD are required prior to accumulating 1,450 hours time-in-service (TIS) on the drive shaft or before further flight if TIS equals or exceeds 1,450 hours, and this AD must be issued immediately.

Since a situation exists that requires the immediate adoption of this regulation, it is found that notice and opportunity for prior public comment hereon are impracticable, and that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

The FAA estimates that this AD will affect 28 helicopters, that it will take approximately 2 work hours to accomplish the required actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$3,360.

Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and, thus, was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this 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 under the caption **ADDRESSES**. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the AD action and determining whether additional rulemaking action would be needed.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of