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. 2000–SW–48–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., Model 205A–1, 205B, 212, 412, 412EP, and 412CF Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. (BHTI) Model 205A–1, 205B, 212, 412, 412EP, and 412CF helicopters. The AD would require removing each existing tail rotor counterweight bellcrank (bellcrank) retention nut (retention nut), replacing each retention nut with a zero hours time-in-service (TIS) retention nut; and follow-up inspections of installed retention nuts. This proposal is prompted by an in-flight loss of a bellcrank due to failure of the retention nut. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the retention nut, which could result in the bellcrank migrating off the crosshead spindle, loss of tail rotor control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 7, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2000–SW–48–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.* Comments may be inspected at the Office of the Regional Counsel 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, Inc., P.O. Box 482, Fort Worth, Texas 76101, telephone (817) 280–3391, fax (817) 280–6466. 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: Michael Kohner, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Certification Office, Fort Worth, Texas 76193–0170, telephone (817) 222–5447, fax (817) 222–5783.

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 document 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 mailed comments submitted in response to this proposal must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket No. 2000–SW–48–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. 2000–SW–48–AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Discussion

This document proposes the adoption of a new AD for BHTI Model 205A–1, 205B, 212, 412, 412EP, and 412CF helicopters. The document proposes to require:

- Removing the two existing retention nuts within 100 hours TIS or 90 days, whichever occurs first;
- Installing a retention nut, part number MS14145L6 or MS17826–6, which are limited to a one-time installation;
- Inspecting the corrosion preventive compound (CPC) coating of the retention nut for deficiencies;
- Inspecting the retention nut for corrosion, mechanical damage, a crack, or looseness; and
- Replacing each retention nut, when necessary.

This proposal is prompted by an in-flight loss of a bellcrank due to failure of the retention nut. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the retention nut, which could result in the bellcrank migrating off the crosshead spindle, loss of tail rotor control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter

The FAA has reviewed the following BHTI Alert Service Bulletins, which describe procedures for installing, inspecting, and replacing the retention nut:

- Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletin No. 205–00–77, Revision A, dated September 13, 2000, which is applicable to Model 205A–1 helicopters;
- Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletin No. 205B–00–31, Revision A, dated September 13, 2000, which is applicable to Model 205B helicopters;
- Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletin No. 212–00–107, Revision A, dated September 13, 2000, which is applicable to Model 212 helicopters;
- Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletin No. 412–00–102, Revision A, dated September 13, 2000, which is applicable to Model 412 and Model 412EP helicopters; and
- Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletin No. 412CF–00–10,

Revision A, dated September 13, 2000, which is applicable to Model 412CF helicopters.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other BHTI Model 205A–1, 205B, 212, 412, 412EP, and 412CF helicopters of the same type design, the proposed AD would require:

- Removing the two existing retention nuts within 100 hours TIS or 90 days, whichever occurs first;
- Installing a retention nut, part number MS14145L6 or MS17826–6, which are limited to a one-time installation;
- Inspecting the CPC coating of the retention nut for deficiencies;
- Inspecting the retention nut for corrosion, mechanical damage, a crack, or looseness; and
- Replacing each retention nut, when necessary.

The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the applicable alert service bulletins described previously.

The FAA estimates that 423 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 2.5 work hours per helicopter to replace each retention nut, and 0.5 work hour to inspect each retention nut once, and that the average labor rate is $60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately $7 per helicopter. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $155,241 to replace the retention nuts and inspect them once.

The regulations proposed herein would 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 proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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, Inc.: Docket No. 2000–SW–48–AD.

Applicability: Model 205A–1, 205B, 212, 412, 412EP, and 412CF 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 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 failure of the tail rotor counterweight bellcrank (bellcrank) retention nut (retention nut), which could result in the bellcrank migrating off the crosshead spindle, loss of tail rotor control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) For Model 205A–1 helicopters:

(1) Within 100 hours time-in-service (TIS) or 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first, remove the two existing retention nuts retaining the bellcranks, part number (P/N) 212–010–709–001 or 212–011–705–001, and install zero hours TIS retention nuts, P/N MS14145L6 or MS17826–6, in accordance with paragraphs (1) through (5) of the Accomplishment Instructions in Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) 205–00–77, Revision A, September 13, 2000 (205A–1 ASB). A used nut may not be installed.

(2) At intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS after accomplishing paragraph (a)(1) of this AD, inspect the retention nuts and corrosion preventive compound (CPC) coating in accordance with paragraph (6) of the Accomplishment Instructions of the 205A–1 ASB. Reapply the CPC coating if deficiencies are found in the coverage and protection of the area. Replace any retention nut with any corrosion, mechanical damage, a crack, or looseness with an airworthy new retention nut before further flight.

(b) For Model 205B helicopters:

(1) Within 100 hours TIS or 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first, remove the two existing retention nuts retaining the bellcranks, P/N 212–011–705–001, and install retention nuts, P/N MS14145L6 or MS17826–6, in accordance with paragraphs (1) through (5) of the Accomplishment Instructions in Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. ASB 205B–00–31, Revision A, dated September 13, 2000 (205B ASB). A used nut may not be installed.

(2) At intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS after accomplishing paragraph (b)(1) of this AD, inspect the retention nuts and CPC coating in accordance with paragraph (6) of the Accomplishment Instructions in the 205B ASB. Reapply the CPC coating if deficiencies are found in the coverage and protection of the area. Replace any retention nut with any corrosion, mechanical damage, a crack, or looseness with an airworthy new retention nut before further flight.

(c) For Model 212 helicopters:

(1) Within 100 hours TIS or 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first, remove the two existing retention nuts retaining the bellcranks, P/N 212–010–709–001 or 212–011–705–001, and install retention nuts, P/N MS14145L6 or MS17826–6, in accordance with paragraphs (1) through (5) of the Accomplishment Instructions in Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletin 212–00–107, Revision A, dated September 13, 2000 (212 ASB). A used retention nut may not be installed.

(2) At intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS after accomplishing paragraph (c)(1) of this AD, inspect the retention nuts and CPC coating in accordance with paragraph (6) of the Accomplishment Instructions in the 212 ASB. Reapply the CPC coating if deficiencies are found in the coverage and protection of the area. Replace any retention nut with any corrosion, mechanical damage, a crack, or looseness with an airworthy new nut before further flight.

(d) For Model 412 or 412EP helicopters:

(1) Within 100 hours TIS or 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first, remove the two existing retention nuts retaining the bellcranks, P/N 212–011–705–001, and install retention nuts, P/N MS14145L6 or MS17826–6, in accordance with paragraphs (1) through (5) of the Accomplishment Instructions in Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. ASB 412–00–102, Revision A, dated September 13, 2000 (412 ASB). A used nut may not be installed.

(2) At intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS after accomplishing paragraph (d)(1) of this AD, inspect the retention nuts and CPC coating in accordance with paragraph (6) of the Accomplishment Instructions in the 412 ASB. Reapply the CPC coating if deficiencies are found in the coverage and protection of the area. Replace any retention nut with any corrosion, mechanical damage, a crack, or looseness with an airworthy new retention nut before further flight.

(e) For Model 412CF helicopters:

(1) Within 100 hours TIS or 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first, remove the two existing retention nuts retaining the bellcranks, P/N 212–011–705–001, and install retention nuts, P/N MS14145L6 or MS17826–6, in accordance with paragraphs (1) through (5) of the Accomplishment Instructions in Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. ASB 412CF–00–10, Revision A, September 13, 2000 (412CF ASB). A used nut may not be installed.

(2) At intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS after accomplishing paragraph (e)(1) of this AD, inspect the retention nuts and CPC coating in accordance with paragraph (6) of the Accomplishment Instructions in the 412CF ASB. Reapply the CPC coating if deficiencies are found in the coverage and protection of the area. Replace any retention nut with any corrosion, mechanical damage, a crack, or looseness with an airworthy new nut before further flight.

(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, Rotorcraft Certification Office, 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 Office.

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

(g) 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.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on February 28, 2001.

Eric Bries,

Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 01–5658 Filed 3–7–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

14 CFR Part 255

[Docket No. OST–2001–9054]

RIN 2105–AC75

Extension of Computer Reservations Systems (CRS) Regulations

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Department is proposing to revise its rules governing airline computer reservations systems (CRSs) by changing the rules' expiration date from March 31, 2001, to March 31, 2002. If the expiration date is not changed, the rules will terminate on March 31, 2001. The proposed extension of the current rules will keep them in effect while the Department carries out its reexamination of the need for CRS regulations. The Department has tentatively concluded that the current rules should be maintained because they appear to be necessary for promoting airline competition and helping to ensure that consumers and their travel agents can obtain complete and accurate information on airline services. The rules were previously extended from December 31, 1997, to March 31, 1999, then to March 31, 2000, and then to March 31, 2001.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before March 19, 2001. Late filed comments will be considered to the extent possible.

ADDRESSES: To make sure your comments and related material are not entered more than once in the docket, please submit them (marked with docket number OST–2001–9054) by only one of the following means:

(1) By mail to the Docket Management Facility, US Department of Transportation, room PL–401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590–0001.

(2) By hand delivery to room PL–401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202–366–9329.

(3) Electronically through the Web Site for the Docket Management System at http://dms.dot.gov. Comments must be filed in Docket OST–2001–9054.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Ray, Office of the General Counsel, 400 Seventh St. SW., Washington, DC 20590, (202) 366–4731.

Electronic Access: You can view and download this document by going to the webpage of the Department's Docket Management System (*http://dms.dot.gov/*). On that page, click on ''search.'' On the next page, type in the last four digits of the docket number shown on the first page of this document. Then click on ''search.'' An electronic copy of this document also may be downloaded by using a computer, modem, and suitable communications software from the Government Printing Office's Electronic Bulletin Board Service at (202) 512–1661. Internet users may reach the Office of the Federal Register's home page at: *http://www.nara.gov/fedreg* and the Government Printing Office's database at: *http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/ index.html.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In 1992 the Department adopted its rules governing CRS operations, 14 CFR Part 255, because almost all airlines operating in the United States relied on the CRSs in marketing their airline services. 57 FR 43780 (September 22, 1992). We determined that the rules were necessary to ensure that each of the airlines and airline affiliates that then owned and controlled the systems did not use the systems to unfairly prejudice the competitive position of other airlines or to provide misleading or inaccurate information to travel agents and their customers. Travel agents depended on CRSs to provide airline information and make bookings for their customers, and almost all airlines received most of their bookings from travel agencies. CRS rules were necessary for these reasons. Our rules as revised will expire on March 31, 2001, unless we readopt them or extend the expiration date. 64 FR 15127 (March 30, 1999). We began a proceeding to determine whether the rules are necessary and should be readopted and, if so, whether they should be modified, by issuing an advance notice of proposed rulemaking. 62 FR 47606 (September 10, 1997). We are proposing here to extend the rules' expiration date to March 31, 2002, so that they will remain in force while we complete our reexamination of the rules.

We have set a ten-day comment period so that we can publish a final decision on this proposal before the rules' current expiration date. Our advance notice of proposed rulemaking and our supplemental advance notice of proposed rulemaking have given interested persons an opportunity to comment on whether the rules should be maintained.

The CRS Business

Four firms provide CRS services in the United States. Three of them are owned in whole or part by one or more U.S. or foreign airlines, and the two systems with little or no airline ownership are marketed by one or more U.S. airlines. A CRS provides information on airline services and other travel services sold through the system to its users. While most system users are travel agents (both traditional agencies and on-line agencies), consumers using Internet reservations services and corporate travel departments also use systems. Someone using a CRS can investigate what airline seats and fares are available and can book a seat on each airline that