eliminates the need for the actions proposed in the NPRM.

FAA’s Conclusions

Upon further consideration, we have determined that the unsafe condition still exists, however, we intend to address it with new AD rulemaking. Accordingly, the NPRM (76 FR 5503, February 1, 2011) is withdrawn.

Withdrawal of the NPRM (76 FR 5503, February 1, 2011) does not preclude the FAA from issuing another related action or commit the FAA to any course of action in the future.

Regulatory Impact

Since this action only withdraws an NPRM (76 FR 5503, February 1, 2011), it is neither a proposed nor a final rule and therefore is not covered under Executive Order 12866, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, or DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979).

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Withdrawal


Issued in Renton, Washington, on February 1, 2013.

Ali Bahrami,
Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2013–09429 Filed 4–19–13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39


RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Model AS350B, BA, B1, B2, B3, and D, and Model AS355E, F, F1, F2, and N helicopters with certain tail rotor (T/R) blades. This proposed AD would require installing additional rivets to secure each T/R blade trailing edge tab (tab), and inspecting for evidence of debonding of the tab after the rivets are installed. This proposed AD is prompted by reports of T/R blade tab debonding. The actions specified by this proposed AD are intended to prevent loss of a T/R blade tab, which could result in excessive vibration and loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by June 21, 2013.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

• Federal eRulemaking Docket: Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.
• Fax: 202–493–2251.
• Mail: Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590–0001.
• Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov or in person at the Docket Operations Office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations Office (telephone 800–647–5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact American Eurocopter Corporation, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641–0000 or (800) 232–0323; fax (972) 641–3775; or at http://www.eurocopter.com/techpub. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary Roach, Aviation Safety Engineer, Regulations and Policy Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137; telephone (817) 222–5110; email gary.b.roach@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

Discussion

The Direction Generale de l’Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the aviation authority for France, has issued DGAC AD No. F–2004–178, dated November 10, 2004, for the Eurocopter AS 350B, BA, BB, B1, B2, B3, and D helicopters, fitted with certain T/R blades. DGAC has also issued AD No. F–2004–176, dated November 10, 2004, for the Eurocopter Model AS 355E, F, F1, F2, and N helicopters with certain T/R blades. DGAC advises of reports of T/R blade tab debonding, and that the loss of the tab leads to a significant increase in the aircraft’s vibration level. As a result, the ADs mandate compliance with the manufacturer’s service information to install additional rivets on the tabs.

FAA’s Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of France and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with France, the European Aviation Safety Agency, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in the DGAC AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to
We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in “Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements.” Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD 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.

For the reasons discussed, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the Regulatory Flexibility Act.
3. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 13132. This rule is not significant to the private sector under Executive Order 13202; and
4. Is not a “significant rule” that warrants notification under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (64 FR 11936, March 11, 1999).

We determined that this proposed AD

(a) Applicability


(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as T/R blade trailing edge tab (tab) debonding. This condition could result in excessive vibration of the helicopter and loss of control of the helicopter.

(c) Comments Due Date

Comments are due June 21, 2013.

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

(e) Required Actions

Within 100 hours time-in-service, install additional rivets on the trailing edge tab of each T/R blade, according to the following procedures, referencing Figure 1 of Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) No. 64.00.05, Revision 2, dated February 15, 2007, or ASB No. 64.00.04, Revision 2, dated February 15, 2007, whichever is applicable to your model helicopter:

1. Lightly sand the area to be drilled, using No. 80 then No. 220 sandpaper.
2. Locate and drill eight 2.5 mm-diameter holes (T): 4 holes (T) 12 mm from the existing rivets (E) and on the centerline of the existing rivets (E), then 4 holes (T) 24 mm from the existing rivets (E) and on the centerline of the existing rivets (E).
3. Debuff and clean the area around the drilled holes.
4. Install 8 rivets (1) on tab (L). Any installation direction of the rivets is permissible (pressure face or suction face of the T/R blade).
5. Inspect the tab for debonding.
   (i) If there is no debonding, paint the area.
   (ii) If there is debonding, replace the tab.

(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Gary Roach, Aviation Safety Engineer, Regulations and Policy Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137; telephone (817) 222–5110; email gary.b.roach@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of Eurocopter France (Eurocopter); Docket No. FAA–2013–0351; Directorate Identifier 2009–SW–049–AD.
the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

(g) Additional Information


(b) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 6410, Tail rotor blades.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on April 11, 2013.

Lance T. Gant,

Acting Directorate Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

We will post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

We received a report of a broken forward support fitting assembly at the inboard track of the inboard flap. During a post-flight taxi, pilots noticed a FLAP TE DISAGREE message on the engine indication and crew alerting system (EICAS). Maintenance personnel found that both components of the forward support fitting assembly had broken, causing the inboard track and transmission to drop 8 inches into the wheel well. The airplane had accumulated 22,328 total flight cycles. Metallurgical analysis found that cracks had initiated at a compound radius in each component flange common to the main landing gear (MLG) beam. Each crack was propagated by fatigue and was followed by final ductile rupture. This condition, if not detected and corrected, could result in loss of inboard flap control and subsequent loss of airplane control.

Relevant Service Information


FAA’s Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information described previously.

In addition, the phrase “corrective actions” might be used in this proposed AD. “Corrective actions” are actions that correct or address any condition found. Corrective actions in an AD could include, for example, repairs.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 690 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD: