DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39


RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters (Type Certificate Currently Held By AgustaWestland S.P.A) (AgustaWestland)

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for AgustaWestland Model A109S, AW109SP, A119, and AW119 MKII helicopters to require removing certain rod end assemblies from service. This proposed AD is prompted by reports of fractures on the rod end assemblies that could damage the main rotor assembly and lead to loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by September 23, 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, the foreign authority’s AD, 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 Agusta Westland, Customer Support & Services, Via Per Tornavento 15, 21019 Somma Lombardo (VA) Italy, ATTN: Giovanni Cecchelli; telephone 39–0331–711133; fax 39 0331 711180; or at http://www.agustawestland.com/technical-bulletins. 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: Robert Grant, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, FAA, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137; telephone 817–222–5110; email robert.grant@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 rule. 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 European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD No. 2012–0208, dated October 5, 2012, to correct an unsafe condition for the AgustaWestland Model A109LUH, A109S, AW109SP, A119, and AW119 MKII helicopters. EASA advises that cases of in-flight fractures of rod end assemblies, part number (P/N) M004–01H007–045, installed on main rotor lag dampers have been reported on Model A109LUH and AW109SP helicopters. An investigation revealed that two batches of rod end assemblies, P/N M004–01H007–041 and M004–01H007–045, could have cracks, according to EASA. EASA states that this condition, if not corrected, could lead to main rotor damage, possibly resulting in loss of control of the helicopter.

EASA’s Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of Italy, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Related Service Information

AgustaWestland issued Bollettino Tecnico (BT) No. 109S–49 for Model A109S helicopters, BT No. 109SP–052 for Model AW109SP helicopters, and BT No. 119–50 for Model AW119 and AW119 MKII helicopters. All of the BTs are dated October 3, 2012. The BTs specify a one-time inspection of each rod end assembly, P/Ns M004–01H007–041 and M004–01H007–045, to determine its serial number. The BTs then require removal from service of certain serial-numbered rod end assemblies because fractures had been reported on rod ends in these batches. According to the BTs, no one was injured in the helicopters and no helicopters were damaged because of these fractures.

Proposed AD Requirements

Within 25 hours time-in-service (TIS), this proposed AD would require removing each affected rod end assembly from service.

Differences Between This Proposed AD and the EASA AD

EASA requires compliance with the inspection and removal of any affected parts from service within 25 hours flight hours or three months. We propose to require removal of the affected parts from service within 25 hours TIS. The EASA AD applies to AgustaWestland Model A109LUH, and this proposed AD would not because that model has no U.S. type certificate.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 91 helicopters of U.S.
We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

**List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

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

**The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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.

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):


   **(a) Applicability**

   This AD applies to AgustaWestland Model A109S, AW109SP, A119, and AW119 MKII helicopters with a main rotor lag damper assembly (lag damper); part number (P/N) 109–0112–39–103, 109–0112–39–105, 109–0112–05–105, or 109–0112–05–107, installed with a rod end assembly; P/N M004–01H007–041 or M004–01H007–045, with a serial number (S/N) 84 through 132, or 4964 through 5011, certified in any category.

   **(b) Unsafe Condition**

   This AD defines the unsafe condition as a crack in a rod end assembly, which could result in fracture of the rod end assembly, damage to the main rotor, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

   **(c) 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.

   **(d) Required Actions**

   (1) Within 24 hours time-in-service, remove the rod end assembly from service.

   (2) Do not install a rod end assembly, P/N M004–01H007–041 or M004–01H007–045, with a S/N 84 through 132 or 4964 through 5011, on any helicopter.

   **(e) Special flight permit**

   Special flight permits are prohibited.

   **(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)**

   (1) The Manager, Safety Management Group, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Robert Grant, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, FAA, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137; telephone 817–222–5110; email robert.grant@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 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**

   (1) AgustaWestland S.p.A. Helicopters Bollétino Tecnico No. 109S–49, No. 109SP–052, and No. 119–50, all dated October 3, 2012, which are not incorporated by reference, contain additional information about the subject of this AD. For service information identified in this AD, contact AgustaWestland, Customer Support & Services, Via Per Tornavento 15, 21019 Somma Lombardo (VA) Italy, ATTN: Giovanni Cecchelli; telephone 39–0331–711133; fax 39 0331 711180; or at http://www.agustawestland.com/technical-bulletins. 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.


   **(h) Subject**

   Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 6200, Main Rotor System.

   Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on July 17, 2013.

   Kim Smith, Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

   [FR Doc. 2013–17617 Filed 7–22–13; 8:45 am]

   **BILLING CODE 4910–13–P**