

Rules and Regulations

Federal Register

Vol. 91, No. 14

Thursday, January 22, 2026

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains regulatory documents having general applicability and legal effect, most of which are keyed to and codified in the Code of Federal Regulations, which is published under 50 titles pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 1510.

The Code of Federal Regulations is sold by the Superintendent of Documents.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2026–0014; Project Identifier MCAI–2024–00309–R; Amendment 39–23241; AD 2026–02–05]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Leonardo S.p.A. Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Leonardo S.p.A. Model AB412 and AB412 EP helicopters. This AD was prompted by a report of a cracked left upper cap angle (cap angle) having a certain part-number. This AD requires repetitively inspecting the cap angle and, depending on the results, performing corrective actions. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective February 6, 2026.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of February 6, 2026.

The FAA must receive comments on this AD by March 9, 2026.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *regulations.gov*. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* (202) 493–2251.
- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5

p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA–2026–0014; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- For European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) material identified in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; phone: +49 221 8999 000; email: *ADs@easa.europa.eu*; website: *easa.europa.eu*. You may find the EASA material on the EASA website at *ad.easa.europa.eu*.
- You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Room 6N–321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222–5110. It is also available at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA–2026–0014.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Deep Gaurav, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (817) 228–3731; email: *deep.gaurav@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this final rule. Send your comments using a method listed under **ADDRESSES**. Include “Docket No. FAA–2026–0014; Project Identifier MCAI–2024–00309–R” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the final rule, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this final rule because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to *regulations.gov*, including any personal

information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this final rule.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this AD contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this AD, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this AD. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Deep Gaurav, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590. Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Background

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, issued EASA AD 2009–0185, dated August 20, 2009 (EASA AD 2009–0185), to correct an unsafe condition on Leonardo S.p.A. Model AB412 and AB412EP helicopters. EASA AD 2009–0185 states that a failure of a cap angle having part number (P/N) 212–030–191–1 was reported, and the preliminary investigation identified that the failure was due to a crack in the hi-lock hole. EASA AD 2009–0185 required repetitively inspecting the cap angle at intervals not exceeding 100 flight hours (FH). EASA then superseded EASA AD 2009–0185 and issued AD 2024–0104, dated May 24, 2024 (EASA AD 2024–0104) (also referred to as the MCAI). The MCAI states that since EASA AD 2009–0185 was issued, the results of further investigations revealed a need to reduce the interval time for the repetitive inspections from 100 FH to 25 FH. The MCAI reduces the interval for the repetitive inspections from 100 FH to 25 FH and expands the applicability to

include Model AB212 helicopters. This condition, if not addressed, could result in reduced structural integrity of the helicopter.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA–2026–0014.

Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed EASA AD 2024–0104, which specifies procedures for repetitively inspecting cap angle P/N 212–030–191–1 for cracks. If any crack or damage is detected, the MCAI specifies contacting Leonardo S.p.A. for approved repair instructions.

This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

FAA’s Determination

These products have been approved by the civil aviation authority (CAA) of another country and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA’s bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, that authority has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is issuing this AD after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

AD Requirements

This AD requires accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2024–0104, described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD. See “Differences Between this AD and the MCAI” for a discussion of the general differences included in this AD.

Differences Between This AD and the MCAI

The MCAI applies to Model AB212 helicopters, whereas this AD does not because that model does not have an FAA type certificate.

Where the MCAI specifies contacting Leonardo S.p.A. for repair instructions, this AD requires using a method approved by the FAA, or EASA, or Leonardo S.p.A.’s EASA Design Organizational Approval.

Where the MCAI requires compliance within 25 FH [flight hours] since last inspection accomplished or within 5 FH after the effective date of EASA AD 2024–0104, this AD requires accomplishing the initial inspection within 5 hours time-in-service after the effective date of this AD.

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA’s ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some CAA ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, EASA AD 2024–0104 is incorporated by reference in this AD. This AD requires compliance with EASA AD 2024–0104 in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2024–0104 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in EASA AD 2024–0104. Material required in EASA AD 2024–0104 for compliance will be available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA–2026–0014 after this AD is published.

Justification for Immediate Adoption and Determination of the Effective Date

Section 553(b) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 551 *et seq.*) authorizes agencies to dispense with notice and comment procedures for rules when the agency, for “good cause,” finds that those procedures are “impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest.” Under this section, an agency, upon finding good cause, may issue a final rule without providing notice and seeking comment prior to issuance. Further, section 553(d) of the APA authorizes agencies to make rules effective in less than thirty days, upon a finding of good cause.

There are currently no domestic operators of these products. Accordingly, notice and opportunity for prior public comment are unnecessary, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b). In addition, for the foregoing reason, the FAA finds that good cause exists pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d) for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) do not apply when an agency finds good cause pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 to adopt a rule without prior notice and comment. Because the

FAA has determined that it has good cause to adopt this rule without prior notice and comment, RFA analysis is not required.

Costs of Compliance

There are no costs of compliance with this AD because there are no helicopters with these type certificates on the U.S. Registry.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA’s authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs describes in more detail the scope of the Agency’s authority.

The FAA is 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

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this regulation:

(1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866, and

(2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

The 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.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

■ 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

2026–02–05 Leonardo S.p.A.: Amendment 39–23241; Docket No. FAA–2026–0014; Project Identifier MCAI–2024–00309–R.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective February 6, 2026.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Leonardo S.p.A. Model AB412 and AB412 EP helicopters, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code 5300, Fuselage Structure (General).

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report of a cracked left upper cap angle (cap angle) part number 212–030–191–1. The FAA is issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking or damage of the cap angle which, if not addressed, could result in reduced structural integrity of the helicopter.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Required Actions

Except as specified in paragraphs (h) and (i) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2024–0104, dated May 24, 2024 (EASA AD 2024–0104).

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2024–0104

(1) Where EASA AD 2024–0104 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where EASA AD 2024–0104 requires compliance in terms of flight hours, this AD requires using hours time-in-service.

(3) Where paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2024–0104 specifies “Within 25 FH [flight hours] since last inspection accomplished in accordance with the instructions of Agusta MBT 412–128 (as required by EASA AD 2009–0185), or within 5 FH after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later”, this AD requires replacing that text with “Within 5 hours time-in-service after the effective date of this AD”.

(4) Where the material referenced in paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2024–0104 specifies “if no cracks are revealed”, this AD requires replacing that text with “If there are no cracks in the area inspected”.

(5) This AD does not adopt paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2024–0104.

(6) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2024–0104 specifies contacting Leonardo for approved instructions if there is a crack or

damage, and where the material referenced in EASA AD 2024–0104 specifies to contact Leonardo Helicopters for further instruction if there is a crack, this AD requires, before further flight, actions done in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Leonardo S.p.A.’s EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(7) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2024–0104 specifies “any crack or damage”, this AD requires replacing that text with “any crack or damage (smoking of the fitting attachment and crazing of sealant bead around the fitting as crack indications)”.

(8) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2024–0104.

(i) No Reporting Requirement

Although the material referenced in EASA AD 2024–0104 specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not require that action.

(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) of this AD and email to: AMOC@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(k) Additional Information

For more information about this AD, contact Deep Gaurav, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (817) 228–3731; email: deep.gaurav@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the material listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this material as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2024–0104, dated May 24, 2024.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA material identified in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; phone: +49 221 8999 000; email: ADs@easa.europa.eu; website: easa.europa.eu. You may find the EASA material on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Room 6N–321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222–5110.

(5) You may view this material at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, visit www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations or email fr.inspection@nara.gov.

Issued on January 13, 2026.

Steven W. Thompson,

Acting Deputy Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2026–01183 Filed 1–21–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2025–0629; Project Identifier MCAI–2023–01183–R; Amendment 39–23237; AD 2026–02–01]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (AHD) Model EC135P1, EC135P2, EC135P2+, EC135P3, EC135T1, EC135T2, EC135T2+, EC635T2+, and EC135T3 helicopters. This AD was prompted by reports of ruptured and deformed flexible couplings. This AD requires inspecting the axial displacement of the tail rotor drive shaft and, depending on the results, taking corrective actions including inspecting the flexible couplings. This AD also prohibits installing a tail rotor drive shaft unless certain procedures are followed. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective February 26, 2026.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of February 26, 2026.

ADDRESSES:

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA–2025–0629; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and