

EMERGENCY AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE



Aircraft Certification Service
Washington, DC

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

We post Emergency ADs on the internet at "av-info.faa.gov"

DATE: July 26, 2002
AD #: 2002-15-51

Send to all U.S. owners and operators of Sikorsky Model S76A, B, and C helicopters.

This Emergency Airworthiness Directive (AD) is prompted by the failure of a main rotor blade (blade) due to lightning strike damage. This condition, if not corrected, could result in the loss of control of the helicopter.

The FAA has reviewed Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation (Sikorsky) Alert Service Bulletin No. 76-65-55A, dated July 25, 2002 (ASB). The ASB specifies reviewing the component log cards or, if necessary, other maintenance and operational records or the service history to determine if a blade has been damaged by a lightning strike, either inflight or on the ground. If the service history cannot be determined, the ASB specifies removing the blade before the next flight. If the records indicate that a blade has been damaged by a lightning strike, the ASB specifies removing it from service before the next flight.

This unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on Sikorsky S76 series helicopters. Therefore, this AD requires, before further flight, removing any blade identified as having been damaged by lightning. The actions are required to be accomplished in accordance with the ASB described previously.

Blades removed from service may be returned to service under a process approved by the Manager of the Boston Aircraft Certification Office.

This rule is issued under 49 U.S.C. Section 44701 pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, and is effective immediately upon receipt of this emergency AD.

2002-15-51 SIKORSKY AIRCRAFT CORPORATION: Docket No. 2002-SW-40-AD.

Applicability: Model S-76A, B, and C 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 (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 before further flight, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent failure of a main rotor blade (blade) and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Review the blade service records and other records in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions, paragraphs 3.A.(1), (2), and (3), of Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation Alert Service Bulletin No. 76-65-55A, dated July 25, 2002, for evidence of damage to a blade due to a lightning strike. Before further flight, remove any blade identified as having been damaged by lightning.

(b) Remove blades, serial number A086-00167, 00429, 00798, 00999, 01165, 01168, 01291, and 02504, which are known to have sustained lightning damage.

(c) If the blade service history cannot be determined, remove the blade from service before further flight.

(d) After the effective date of this AD, should a blade be subjected to lightning strike damage, remove the blade from service before the next flight.

(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, Boston Aircraft Certification Office, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Boston Aircraft Certification Office. Blades removed from service in accordance with this AD may be returned to service under a process approved by the Manager, Boston Aircraft Certification Office.

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

(f) Special flight permits will not be issued.

(g) Copies of the applicable service information may be obtained from Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, Attn: Manager, Commercial Tech Support, 6900 Main Street, Stratford, Connecticut 06614, phone (203) 386-3001, fax (203) 386-5983.

(h) **Emergency AD 2002-15-51, issued July 26, 2002, becomes effective upon receipt.**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard Noll, Aviation Safety Engineer, Boston Aircraft Certification Office, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803, telephone (781) 238-7160, fax (781) 238-7170.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on July 26, 2002.

Eric Bries,
Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.