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## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

#### **14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2013-0635; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-081-AD; Amendment 39-17720; AD 2013-26-11]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

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**SUMMARY:** We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Model EC225LP helicopters. This AD requires inspecting the swashplates for corrosion or a crack, and making the appropriate repairs or replacement of parts. This AD was prompted by the discovery of corrosion on the swashplates when the main rotor hub (MRH) assemblies were reconditioned. The actions of this AD are intended to detect corrosion or a crack in the swashplates, which could lead to failure of the swashplates and subsequent loss of helicopter control.

**DATES:** This AD is effective February 18, 2014.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain document listed in this AD as of February 18, 2014.

**ADDRESSES:** For service information identified in this 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.

#### **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 AD, the foreign authority's AD, any incorporated-by-reference service information, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is U.S. Department of

Transportation, Docket Operations Office, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

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

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Discussion**

On July 23, 2013, at 78 FR 44043, the Federal Register published our notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM), which proposed to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to Eurocopter Model EC225LP helicopters with an MRH assembly with a rotating swashplate, part number (P/N) 332A31-3074-00 or 332A31-3076-00, and stationary swashplate, P/N 332A31-3079-00 or 332A31-3079-01, installed. The NPRM proposed to require inspecting the swashplates for corrosion or a crack, and making the appropriate repairs or replacement of parts. The proposed requirements were intended to prevent failure of the swashplate and subsequent loss of helicopter control.

The NPRM was prompted by AD No. 2012-0131, dated July 31, 2012, issued by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, to correct an unsafe condition for Eurocopter Model EC225LP helicopters. EASA advises that corrosion has been reported on the rotating and stationary swashplates of the MRH assembly of several helicopters. This condition may cause cracks on the swashplates, which may cause failure of MRH parts and loss of control of the helicopter. The EASA AD requires repetitive inspections of the affected swashplates after two years and replacing the MRH assembly if a crack is found.

### **Comments**

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD, but we received no comments on the NPRM (78 FR 44043, July 23, 2013).

### **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, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in the EASA AD. We are issuing this AD because we evaluated all information provided by EASA and determined the unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of these same type designs and that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD requirements as proposed.

### **Related Service Information**

We reviewed Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. EC225-05A030, Revision 0, dated July 12, 2012 (ASB). The ASB states that while reconditioning the main rotor mast (MRM) assemblies, Eurocopter found corrosion on the rotating and stationary swashplates under the retaining flanges of the swashplate sub-assembly bearing. Over time, this corrosion could initiate a crack. The ASB specifies inspecting the MRM assembly for corrosion or a crack and replacing the MRM assembly if a crack or corrosion is found. The FAA and EASA use the term MRH assembly, while Eurocopter uses MRM assembly to describe the same section of the helicopter.

## **Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this AD affects three helicopters of U.S. Registry and that labor costs average \$85 per work-hour. Based on these estimates, we expect the following costs:

- Inspecting the rotating and stationary swashplates for corrosion or a crack requires 8 work-hours for a cost of \$680 per helicopter and \$2,040 for the U.S. fleet, per inspection cycle. Making and installing the placard requires 0.5 work-hour, for a cost of \$43 per helicopter. The labor cost of making changes to the flight manual is negligible.
- Replacing the MRH assembly requires 24 work-hours and parts cost \$5,000, for a total cost of \$7,040 per helicopter.

## **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.

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 helicopters 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 that this AD:

- (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866;
- (2) Is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and
- (4) 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.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this 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.

## **Adoption of the Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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 (AD):



**2013-26-11 Eurocopter France Helicopters (Eurocopter):** Amendment 39-17720; Docket No. FAA-2013-0635; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-081-AD.

**(a) Applicability**

This AD applies to Eurocopter Model EC225LP helicopters with a main rotor hub (MRH) assembly with a rotating swashplate, part number (P/N) 332A31-3074-00 or 332A31-3076-00, and stationary swashplate, P/N 332A31-3079-00 or 332A31-3079-01, installed, certificated in any category.

**(b) Unsafe Condition**

This AD defines the unsafe condition as corrosion or a crack in the stationary or rotating swashplate of the MRH assembly, which could lead to failure of the swashplate and subsequent loss of helicopter control.

**(c) Effective Date**

This AD becomes effective February 18, 2014.

**(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**

(1) Within 110 hours time-in-service (TIS) or before the MRH assembly accumulates 1,320 hours TIS, whichever occurs later, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 1,320 hours TIS, visually inspect the rotating and stationary swashplates for corrosion or a crack by following the Accomplishment Instructions, paragraph 3.B.2 and Figures 1 through 3, of Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. EC225-05A030, Revision 0, dated July 12, 2012 (ASB).

(2) If a crack exists in the rotating or stationary swashplates, replace the MRH assembly with an airworthy MRH assembly.

(3) If corrosion exists without any visual indication of cracking, do the following:

(i) Before further flight, install a placard stating "NO FLIGHT IN OAT BELOW -30 °C" in the full view of the pilots and add the statement "NO FLIGHT IN OAT BELOW -30 °C" to the Operating Limitations Section of the helicopter's Rotorcraft Flight Manual (RFM) by making pen and ink changes or by inserting a copy of this AD in Section 2.3 Flight Envelope, Item 2 Temperature Limits.

(ii) Within 150 hours TIS or 6 months after the inspection when the corrosion was first detected, whichever occurs first, replace the MRH assembly with an airworthy assembly. Remove any placard that states "NO FLIGHT IN OAT BELOW -30 °C" from the helicopter and remove any related limitation from the RFM.

(4) Replacement of an MRH assembly does not constitute terminating action for the repetitive inspections required by paragraph (e)(1) of this AD.

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

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Group, 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 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**

The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) You may view EASA AD No. 2012-0131, dated July 31, 2012 at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating it in Docket No. FAA-2013-0635.

**(h) Subject**

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 6230, Main Rotor Mast/Swashplate.

**(i) Material Incorporated by Reference**

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

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

(i) Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. EC225-05A030, Revision 0, dated July 12, 2012.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For Eurocopter service information identified in this 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>.

(4) You may view this service information at FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call (202) 741-6030, or go to: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on December 24, 2013.

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