FR 11001, March 16, 2009), and adding the following new AD:


(a) Applicability

This AD applies to Model 412 and 412EP helicopters with a main rotor yoke assembly (yoke), part number (P/N) 412–010–101–125, –127, –129, or –133, installed; and Model 412CF helicopters with a yoke, P/N 412–010–101–127 or –129, installed; certificated in any category.

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as fatigue cracking of a yoke, failure of the yoke, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

(c) Affected ADs

This AD supersedes AD 2009–05–09, Amendment 39–15833 (74 FR 11001, March 16, 2009).

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time, unless it has been accomplished previously.

(e) Required Actions

Within 10 hours time-in-service (TIS):

(1) Review the helicopter records to determine all of the helicopter models on which an affected yoke has been installed since its production and the hours of each affected yoke.

(2) If an affected part-numbered yoke is installed or has ever been installed on a Model 412CF helicopter or on a Model 412 or 412EP helicopter with a (BHT–412–SI–62) slope landing kit, P/N 412–704–012–101, installed, do the following:

(i) Reidentify the P/N on the side of the yoke by using a vibrating stylus and etching two lines through the last three digits of the existing P/N and etching “137FM” adjacent to where you etched through the last three digits of the original P/N. This converts each affected yoke P/N to a new yoke P/N 412–010–101–137FM. The serial number remains the same.

(ii) Treat the etched surface with chemical film, and apply primer and paint.

(iii) Record the reidentified P/N on the applicable component history card or equivalent record.

(3) If you cannot determine all the model helicopters on which an affected yoke has been installed since its production or whether it has ever been installed on a Model 412 or 412EP helicopter with a (BHT–412–SI–62) slope landing kit, P/N 412–704–012–101, installed, perform the actions required by paragraphs (e)(2)(i) through (e)(2)(iii) of this AD.

(4) For each reidentified yoke, P/N 412–010–101–137FM, reduce the retirement life from 5,000 hours TIS to 4,500 hours TIS. Record the revised life limit on the applicable component history card or equivalent record.

(5) Revise the Airworthiness Limitations section of the applicable maintenance manual or the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness by reducing the retirement life from 5,000 hours TIS to 4,500 hours TIS for each reidentified yoke, P/N 412–010–101–137FM.

(f) Special Flight Permit

Special flight permits will not be issued.

(g) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Rotorcraft Certification Office, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Michael Kohner, ASW–170, Aviation Safety Engineer, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137; telephone (817) 222–5170, fax (817) 222–5783; email Z-awy-asw-170@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under 14 CFR Part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR Part 91, subparagraph 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.

(h) Additional Information

Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Alert Service Bulletins No. 412–08–128 and No. 412CF–08–35, both Revision A and both dated April 14, 2009, which are not incorporated by reference, contain additional information about the subject of this AD. For service information identified in this AD, contact Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., P.O. Box 482, Fort Worth, TX 76101; telephone (817) 280–3391; fax (817) 280–6466; or at http://www.bellcustomer.com/files/. You may review service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

(i) Subject

Joint Aircraft System/Component (JASC) Code: 6220 Main Rotor Head.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on June 3, 2013.

Kim Smith,

Directorate Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2013–13797 Filed 6–10–13; 8:45 am]
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:
Robert Grant, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, FAA, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, 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 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 European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD No. 2011–0108, dated June 7, 2011, to correct an unsafe condition for Eurocopter Model EC 135B and EC135B1 helicopters. EASA advises of an in-flight loss of a fin on a Model EC135B1 helicopter. According to EASA, a crack in the fittings attaching the upper fin to the fenestron (tail rotor assembly) was discovered during an investigation. As a result, EASA issued an emergency AD to mandate repetitive inspections of the upper fin attachment fittings. EASA states that Eurocopter has now developed modification (MOD) 0754B40 to increase the strength of the fuselage-fin junction fittings by installing two reinforced single-piece fittings to replace the affected fittings, which is terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements. EASA subsequently issued AD No. 2011–0108, which superseded its emergency AD, to require installation of MOD 0754B40 and to retain the repetitive inspection requirements until the MOD is installed.

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 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

Eurocopter has issued Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05A017, Revision 2, dated December 9, 2010, which specifies repetitively inspecting the fittings for a crack and replacing each fitting if there is a crack. Eurocopter has also issued Service Bulletin No. 53–029, Revision 1, dated March 10, 2011, which specifies replacing the fittings with reinforced fittings in accordance with MOD 0754B40.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require repetitively inspecting certain part-numbered fittings for a crack, and if there is a crack, removing the fittings from service before further flight. Also, within 180 hours time-in-service (TIS), this AD proposes removing certain part-numbered fittings from service. Replacing the fittings with airworthy fittings not listed in the applicability paragraph of this proposed AD would be terminating action for the requirements of this AD. The affected fittings would not be eligible to be installed on any helicopter.

Differences Between This Proposed AD and the EASA AD

This AD would not require replacing the upper fin to fenestron fittings with reinforced fittings in accordance with MOD 0754B40 within 6 calendar months as stated in the EASA AD but rather would require removing the affected fittings from service within the equivalent 180 hours TIS.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 9 helicopters of U.S. Registry. We estimate that operators would incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD, based on an average labor rate of $85 per work hour. It would take 1 work hour to inspect the fittings and about 3 inspections would occur before replacement. It would take 8 work hours to replace the fittings and required parts would cost $3,311. Based on these figures, the total cost would be $4,246 per helicopter and $38,214 for the U.S. fleet.

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 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding

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):

European Airworthiness Bulletin AD 2010–05A017, Revision 2, dated December 9, 2010 (ASB). Inspect the hatched area as depicted in Details B, C, and D of Figure 2 of the ASB. A high-resolution (more than 2 million pixels) digital camera or dye-penetrant inspection may be used to facilitate the crack inspection.

(ii) If there is a crack in any fitting, before further flight, remove all four fittings from service.

(2) Within 180 hours TIS, remove the fittings from service.


(e) Credit for Actions Previously Completed

Inspections accomplished before the effective date of this AD in accordance with the procedures specified in Eurocopter Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05A017, Revision 2, dated December 9, 2010; Revision 1, dated January 27, 2010; and Revision 0, dated September 28, 2007, are considered acceptable for compliance with the inspection specified in paragraph (d)(1) of this AD.

(f) Special flight permits

Special flight permits will not be issued.

(g) 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, in the absence of 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.

(h) Additional Information

(1) Eurocopter Service Bulletin No. 53–029, Revision 1, dated March 10, 2011, which is not incorporated by reference, contains additional information about the subject of this AD. 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.

(2) The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency AD No. 2011–0108, dated June 7, 2011.

(i) Subject