

The DGAC advises that the absence of a resistor R8 on the ASU No. 2 boards can lead to a malfunction of the electric circuits supplying the "BATT. TEMP." red warning light, the "ENGINE CHIP" amber caution light, and the rotor RPM signal output to the VEMD.

This proposal is prompted by an anomaly discovered by the manufacturer. The actions specified by this proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the "BATT. TEMP." warning light, which, if combined with a battery overheat, can result in a battery thermal runaway without the pilot's knowledge. An uncontrolled battery thermal runaway can result in an explosion that could cause loss of the control of the helicopter.

Eurocopter has issued Service Bulletin No. 77.00.07, dated March 27, 2000, which specifies checking to determine if the resistor R8 is installed on the PCB within 25 hours time-in-service (TIS) and, if a resistor R8 is not installed, replacing the PCB with one that has a resistor R8 installed within 50 hours TIS. The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued AD No. 2001-319-083(A), dated July 25, 2001, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in France.

This helicopter model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of 14 CFR 21.29 and the applicable bilateral agreement. Pursuant to the applicable bilateral agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

This unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of the same type design registered in the United States. Therefore, the proposed AD would require, within 15 hours time-in-service (TIS), inspecting the ASU No. 2 PCB on helicopters with serial numbers 3062 and earlier to determine if the resistor R8 is installed, and if it is not installed, replacing the PCB with an airworthy PCB with resistor R8 installed within 50 hours TIS.

The FAA estimates that 30 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 1 work hour per helicopter to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate

is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost \$1,200. The manufacturer states in its service bulletin that PCB's will be replaced free of charge. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$37,800, if a PCB is replaced in the entire fleet and there is no free replacement by the manufacturer.

The regulations proposed herein 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. Therefore, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

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

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

#### The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding a new airworthiness directive to read as follows:

**Eurocopter France:** Docket No. 2002-SW-05-AD.

**Applicability:** Model AS350B3 helicopters, serial numbers (S/N) 3062 and earlier, 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 (c) 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 as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent malfunction of the electrical circuits controlling the "BATT. TEMP." red warning light, the "ENGINE CHIP" amber caution and the rotor revolutions-per-minute (RPM) signal output to the vehicle engine management display (VEMD), accomplish the following:

(a) Within 15 hours time-in-service (TIS), inspect the ASU No. 2 printed circuit board (PCB), part number SE 03022, to determine if resistor R8 is installed.

(b) If the resistor R8 is not installed, within 50 hours TIS, replace the PCB with an airworthy PCB that has resistor R8 installed.

**Note 2:** Eurocopter Service Bulletin No. 77.00.07, dated March 27, 2000, pertains to the subject of this AD.

(c) 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, Regulations Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Regulations Group.

**Note 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Regulations Group.

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with 14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199 to operate the helicopter to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

**Note 4:** The subject of this AD is addressed in Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (France) AD 2001-319-083(A), dated July 25, 2001.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on January 11, 2003.

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