

petitioner could be reached. The operating experience at several nuclear power plants that have experienced fuel failures shows that fuel degradation has progressed in a manner which is controllable. The event (River Bend) identified by the petitioner as evidence of the likelihood of high crud levels occurred only once at that plant and has not been repeated there, or at any other plant in the United States. Finally, technical specifications for monitoring of reactor coolant activity and the requirements in 10 CFR Part 20 to maintain occupational exposures as low as reasonably achievable have resulted in licensee operational practices for early identification of coolant activity increase due to crud deposits before they build to the levels postulated by the petitioner. The Commission considers that the petitioner's hypothetical discussion of a mechanism preventing early detection of abnormal activity levels is not credible. For these reasons, the Commission has determined that the petitioner's bases for requesting rulemaking have not been substantiated.

For these reasons, the Commission denies PRM-50-73 and PRM-50-73A.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 9th day of July, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
**Annette Vietti-Cook,**  
*Secretary of the Commission.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-SW-07-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model EC120B Helicopters

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for the specified Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) model helicopters. This proposal would require operators to either temporarily or permanently secure the electrical bonding braid (bonding braid) that is installed on the left cyclic pitch control stick base within 10 hours time-in-service (TIS) and, if temporarily secured, installing a

permanent attachment system for the bonding braid within 500 hours TIS or 12 months, whichever occurs first. This proposal is prompted by a report of a bonding braid twisting around the attachment nut installed on the bolt that connects the roll channel torque link to the left-hand cyclic pitch control stick. The actions specified by this proposed AD are intended to prevent an unsecured bonding braid from restricting travel of the cyclic pitch control stick, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before September 15, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-SW-07-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. You may also send comments electronically to the Rules Docket at the following address: [9-asw-adcomments@faa.gov](mailto:9-asw-adcomments@faa.gov). Comments may be inspected at the Office of the Regional Counsel between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Richard Monschke, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0110, telephone (817) 222-5116, fax (817) 222-5961.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this document may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their mailed comments submitted in response to this

proposal must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 2003-SW-07-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

#### Discussion

The Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (DGAC), the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Eurocopter Model EC 120 B helicopters. The DGAC advises that there was a report involving twisting of a bonding braid at the base of a cyclic stick that restricted movement of the cyclic pitch sticks.

Eurocopter has issued Alert Telex No. 67A008, dated July 8, 2002, which specifies installing a clamp to position the bonding braid upwards and holding it against the cyclic pitch stick. DGAC classified this alert telex as mandatory and issued AD 2002-371-010(A), dated July 24, 2002, 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, 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.

The previously described 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 10 hours TIS, temporarily or permanently securing the bonding braid using clamps, then, if not already accomplished, installing a permanent attachment system within 500 hours TIS or 12 months, whichever occurs first. Installing the permanent attachment system is a terminating action for the requirements of this AD. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the alert telex described previously.

On July 10, 2002, the FAA issued a new version of 14 CFR part 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs the FAA's AD system. The regulation now includes material that relates to altered products, special flight permits, and alternative methods of compliance. Because we have now included this