

10718, with fuel heater P/N series 10839 or other acceptable parts identified under the PWC Interchangeable Control Part Number, at the next removal of the engine low pressure fuel filter, but not later than 90 days after the effective date of this AD.

(b) Do not install on PWC engines any Stewart Warner fuel heater P/N series 10718, after the effective date of this AD.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(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, Engine Certification Office (ECO). Operators must submit their request through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, ECO.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this airworthiness directive, if any, may be obtained from the ECO.

Special Flight Permits

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be done.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in Transport Canada airworthiness directive CF-2000-34, dated November 23, 2000.

Effective Date

(e) This amendment becomes effective on September 10, 2003.

Issued in Burlington, Massachusetts, on July 30, 2003.

Francis A. Favara,

Acting Manager, Engine and Propeller Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-SW-02-AD; Amendment 39-13251; AD 2003-15-08]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS350B, B1, B2, B3, BA, and D Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) for the specified Eurocopter France (ECF) model helicopters that requires replacing the main gearbox (MGB) opening neoprene cowlings seals (seals) with airworthy glass/silicone seals. This

amendment is prompted by the discovery that neoprene seals currently installed on the MGB opening cowlings do not provide the fire protection required by the airworthiness standards. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent a fire in the engine compartment from reaching the MGB compartment that contains parts that are not fire resistant and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Effective September 10, 2003.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of September 10, 2003.

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from American Eurocopter Corporation, 2701 Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, Texas 75053-4005, telephone (972) 641-3460, fax (972) 641-3527. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ed Cuevas, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Safety Management Group, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0111, telephone (817) 222-5355, fax (817) 222-5961.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an AD for the specified ECF model helicopters was published in the **Federal Register** on April 22, 2003 (68 FR 19759). That action proposed to require replacing the neoprene seals with glass/silicone seals.

The Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (DGAC), the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on the specified ECF Model helicopters delivered before July 1, 2002. The DGAC advises that neoprene seals bonded to the MGB mobile cowlings have low fire resistance, which does not meet the certification criteria. In the event of an uncontrolled fire in the engine compartment, the fire could spread to the MGB compartment.

ECF has issued Alert Service Bulletin No. 53.00.31, dated July 11, 2002 (ASB), which specifies replacing the MGB neoprene seals with glass/silicone seals that have increased fire-resistance. The DGAC classified this ASB as mandatory and issued AD 2002-537-094(A), dated October 30, 2002, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in France.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were received on the proposal or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public. The FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed.

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. However, for clarity and consistency in this final rule, we have retained the language of the NPRM regarding that material.

The FAA estimates that this AD will affect 583 helicopters of U.S. registry, that it will take approximately 2 work hours per helicopter to install the seals, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts will cost approximately \$98. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$127,094.

The regulations adopted herein 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. Therefore, it is determined that this final rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (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); and (3) 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 final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

■ Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) as follows: