

# Rules and Regulations

Federal Register

Vol. 68, No. 209

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains regulatory documents having general applicability and legal effect, most of which are keyed to and codified in the Code of Federal Regulations, which is published under 50 titles pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 1510.

The Code of Federal Regulations is sold by the Superintendent of Documents. Prices of new books are listed in the first FEDERAL REGISTER issue of each week.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-NE-47-AD; Amendment 39-13352; AD 2003-22-05]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Hartzell Propeller Inc. Model HC-A6A-3 Series Propellers.

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

**ACTION:** Final rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Hartzell Propeller Inc. model HC-A6A-3 series propellers with A10460 series composite blades. This AD requires initial and repetitive visual inspections of A10460 series composite blades for cracks. This AD is prompted by reports of cracks in propeller blades, including an in-flight separation of a blade that caused damage to the airplane. We are issuing this AD to prevent separation of the propeller blade due to possible fatigue failure, which could result in damage to the airplane and possible loss of control of the airplane.

**DATES:** This AD becomes effective November 13, 2003.

We must receive any comments on this AD by December 29, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Use one of the following addresses to submit comments on this AD:

- By mail: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-NE-47-AD, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803-5299.
- By fax: (781) 238-7055.
- By e-mail: [9-ane-adcomment@faa.gov](mailto:9-ane-adcomment@faa.gov)

You can get the service information referenced in this AD from Hartzell Propeller Inc. Technical Publications Department, One Propeller Place, Piqua, OH 45356; telephone (937) 778-4200; fax (937) 778-4391.

You may examine the AD docket, by appointment, at the FAA, New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA. You may examine the service information, by appointment, at the FAA, New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Tomaso DiPaolo, Aerospace Engineer, Chicago Aircraft Certification Office, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 2300 East Devon Avenue, Des Plaines, IL 60018; telephone: (847) 294-7031; fax: (847) 294-7834.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On July 31, 2003, a model A10460 series composite propeller blade separated from a model HC-A6A-3 series propeller while in flight and damaged the airplane. The model HC-A6A-3 series propeller was installed on the right-hand engine on a Short Brothers Ltd. SD3-60 Variant 200 airplane, commonly referred to as a Series 300 airplane. The manufacturer of the propeller issued an alert service bulletin (ASB) on September 10, 2003 to require initial and repetitive visual inspections of the composite blades for cracks. On September 12, the manufacturer reported that another cracked blade was found on an airplane when the propellers were inspected using the ASB. Because the manufacturer and the FAA are continuing their investigations into the causes of the cracks, there is no terminating action for the repetitive inspections.

#### Relevant Service Information

We have reviewed and approved the technical contents of Hartzell Propeller Inc. ASB No. HC-ASB-61-265, dated September 10, 2003, that describes procedures for visually inspecting the composite propeller blade on-wing and at overhaul.

#### FAA's Determination and Requirements of this AD

The unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other Hartzell Propeller, Inc. propellers of the same type design. We are issuing this AD to prevent separation of the propeller blade due to possible fatigue failure, which could result in damage to the airplane and possible loss of control of the airplane. This AD requires:

- An initial visual inspection of the propeller blades for cracks within 100 flight hours after the effective date of this AD, but no later than 30 days after the effective date of this AD; and
- Repetitive visual inspections of the propeller blades for cracks at intervals of 300 flight hours and at every overhaul, and
- Replacing any cracked blade before further flight.

#### FAA's Determination of the Effective Date

Since an unsafe condition exists that requires the immediate adoption of this AD, we have found that notice and opportunity for public comment before issuing this AD are impracticable, and that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

#### Changes to 14 CFR Part 39—Effect on the AD

On July 10, 2002, we issued a new version of 14 CFR part 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs our AD system. This regulation now includes material that relates to special flight permits, alternative methods of compliance, and altered products. This material previously was included in each individual AD. Since this material is included in 14 CFR part 39, we will not include it in future AD actions.

#### Interim Action

These actions are interim actions and we may take further rulemaking actions in the future.

#### Comments Invited

This AD is a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment; however, we invite you to submit any written relevant data, views, or arguments regarding this AD. Send your