

Actions	Compliance	Procedures
(4) Do not install any Anjou Aeronautique/TRW Repa S.A./L'Aiglon types 343, 343-1, 343-1, 343M, 343AM, 343B, 343BM, 343C, 343CM, and 343D safety belts and restraint systems.	As of February 17, 2004 (the effective date of this AD).	Not Applicable.

Note: All inertia-reel type safety belts and restraint systems or fixed rear safety belts and restraint systems from another manufacturer are not affected by this AD.

What About Alternative Methods of Compliance?

(f) You may request a different method of compliance or a different compliance time for this AD by following the procedures in 14 CFR 39.13. Send your request to the Manager, Manager, Standards Office, Small Airplane Directorate, FAA, For information on any already approved alternative methods of compliance, contact Karl Schletzbaum, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329-4146; facsimile: (816) 329-4090.

Is There Material Incorporated by Reference?

(g) You must do the actions required by this AD per Anjou Aeronautique Service Bulletin No. 343-25-02, Issue 1, dated October 23, 2001, and Anjou Aeronautique Service Bulletin No. 343-1-25-01, Issue 1, dated October 23, 2001. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of this service bulletin in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. You may get a copy from Anjou Aeronautique, 13 Avenue De L'Osier, 49125 Tierce, France; telephone: 33 0 2 41 42 88 92; facsimile: 33 0 2 41 42 15 77. You may review copies at FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, suite 700, Washington, DC.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on December 17, 2003.

Michael Gallagher,

Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-SW-36-AD; Amendment 39-13401; AD 2003-26-04]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Model A109E Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Agusta S.p.A. (Agusta) Model A109E helicopters. This action requires certain inspections of the rod-end of the main rotor head damper for freedom of movement, and depending on the torque required to move the rod-end, either further inspection for a crack or replacing the rod-end. This amendment is prompted by reports of rod-end fractures due to fatigue failure resulting in increased helicopter vibrations. This condition, if not corrected, could result in failure of the rod-end, extreme vibrations, and a subsequent forced landing or loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Effective January 15, 2004.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of January 15, 2004.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before March 1, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-SW-36-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.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Agusta, 21017 Cascina Costa di Samarate (VA) Italy, Via Giovanni Agusta 520, telephone 39 (0331) 229111, fax 39 (0331) 229605-222595. 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: 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: The Ente Nazionale per l'Aviazione Civile (ENAC), the airworthiness authority for Italy, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Agusta Model A109E helicopters. The ENAC advises that inspections of the rod-end should be carried out as called for by the manufacturer's service information.

Agusta has issued Bollettino Tecnico (BT) No. 109EP-37, dated July 15, 2003; BT No. 109EP-37, Revision A, dated July 30, 2003; and Errata Corrige, dated September 2, 2003; which specify an inspection of each damper rod-end assembly, part number (P/N) Microtecnica 3637GR85, for seizure or a crack. Agusta reports rod-end fractures due to fatigue failure originating from the thread under cut of the rod-end resulting in increased helicopter vibrations. Also, during the first few hours of operation, the rotational torque of the spherical bearing increases generating additional loads on the rod-end. ENAC has classified this BT as mandatory and issued AD Nos. 2003-231, dated July 18, 2003, and 2003-249, dated August 1, 2003, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in Italy.

This helicopter model is manufactured in Italy 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, ENAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of ENAC, 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, this AD is being issued to prevent failure of the rod-end, extreme vibration, and a subsequent forced landing or loss of control of the helicopter. This AD requires the following:

- Within 25 hours time-in-service (TIS), inspect the rod-end to determine if it can be rotated by hand.
- If the rod-end can be rotated by hand, no further action is required.
- If the rod-end cannot be rotated by hand, determine the torque value