

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, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Seattle ACO.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Seattle ACO.

Special Flight Permits

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 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 accomplished.

Effective Date

(e) This amendment becomes effective on March 22, 2001.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on February 8, 2001.

Vi L. Lipski,

*Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 01-3695 Filed 2-14-01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2000-8460; Notice No. 01-02]

RIN 2120-AH17

Airworthiness Directives

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM); extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: This action extends the comment period for an NPRM that was published on January 12, 2001. In that document, the FAA proposed to move several standard provisions currently found in every airworthiness directive into its regulations pertaining to airworthiness directives. This extension is a result of a request from Helicopter Association International to extend the comment period to the proposal.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before March 29, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Address your comments to the Docket Management System, U.S. Department of Transportation, Room Plaza 401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. You must identify the docket number FAA-2000-

8460 at the beginning of your comments, and you should submit two copies of your comments. If you wish to receive confirmation that FAA received your comments, include a self-addressed, stamped postcard.

You may also submit comments through the Internet to <http://dms.dot.gov>. you may review the public docket containing comments to these proposed regulations in person in the Dockets Office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Dockets Office is on the plaza level of the NASSIF Building at the Department of Transportation at the above address. Also, you may review public dockets on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Donald Byrne, Assistant Chief Counsel, Regulations Division, AGC-200, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20591; telephone (202) 267-3073.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed action by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Comments relating to the environmental, energy, federalism, or economic impact that might result from adopting the proposals in this document also are invited. Substantive comments should be accompanied by cost estimates. Comments must identify the regulatory docket or notice number and be submitted in duplicate to the DOT Rules Docket address specified above.

All comments received, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking, will be filed in the docket. The docket is available for public inspection before and after the comment closing date.

All comments received on or before the closing date will be considered by the Administrator before taking action on this proposed rulemaking. Comments filed late will be considered as far as possible without incurring expense or delay. The proposals in this document may be changed in light of the comments received.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this document must include a pre-addressed, stamped postcard with those comments on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. FAA-2000-8460." The postcard will be date stamped and mailed to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

An electronic copy is available on the Internet by taking the following steps:

(1) Go to the search function of the Department of Transportation's electronic Docket Management System (DMS) Web page (<http://dms.dot.gov/search>).

(2) On the search page type in the last four digits of the Docket number shown at the beginning of this notice. Click on "search."

(3) On the next page, which contains the Docket summary information for the docket selected, click on the proposed rule.

An electronic copy is also available on the Internet through FAA's web page at <http://www.faa.gov/avr/arm/nprm/nprm.htm> or the **Federal Register's** web page at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html.

Further, a copy may be obtained by submitting a written request to the Federal Aviation Administration, Office of Rulemaking, ARM-1, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, or by calling (202) 267-9680. Make sure to identify the notice number or docket number of this proposed rule.

Background

On November 29, 2000, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued Notice No. 00-15, Airworthiness Directives (66 FR 3382, January 12, 2001). Comments to that document were to be received on or before February 12, 2001.

By letter dated January 31, 2001, Helicopter Association International requested that the FAA extend the comment period for Notice No. 00-15 until March 14, 2001, to allow HAI to comment on the proposed revisions to part 39. Although HAI requests only a 30 day extension of the comment period, the FAA believes a 45 day extension would be adequate for HAI and other interested persons to provide comment to Notice No. 00-15.

Extension of Comment Period

In accordance with § 11.47 of Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, the FAA has reviewed the petition made by HAI for extension of the comment period to Notice No. 00-15. HAI has shown an interest in the proposed rule and good cause for the extension. The FAA also has determined that extension of the comment period is in the public interest, and that good cause exists for taking this action.

Accordingly, the comment period for Notice No. 00-15 is extended until March 29, 2001.

Ronald T. Wojnar,

Acting Director, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 01-3884 Filed 2-12-01; 5:02 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2000-SW-54-AD; Amendment 39-12105; AD 2001-01-51]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Model 222, 222B, 222U, 230, and 430 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This document publishes in the **Federal Register** an amendment adopting Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2001-01-51, which was sent previously to all known U.S. owners and operators of Bell Helicopter Textron Canada (BHTC) Model 222, 222B, 222U, 230, and 430 helicopters by individual letters. This AD requires visually inspecting the main rotor hydraulic actuator support (support) to verify the presence of all dowel pins and sealant between the support and transmission and verifying the proper torque of each attaching nut (nut). This amendment is prompted by the failure of a support resulting in an accident of a BHTC Model 222U helicopter. All retaining studs and shear pins were found sheared or pulled out at the junction between the support and the transmission case. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent failure of the support and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Effective March 2, 2001, to all persons except those persons to whom it was made immediately effective by Emergency AD 2001-01-51, issued on January 5, 2001, which contained the requirements of this amendment.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of March 2, 2001.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before April 16, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation

Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2000-SW-54-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 applicable service information may be obtained from Bell Helicopter Textron Canada, 12,800 Rue de l'Avenir, Mirabel, Quebec JON1LO, telephone (450) 437-2862 or (800) 363-8023, fax (450) 433-0272. 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: Jim Grigg, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Regulations Group, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0111, telephone (817) 222-5490, fax (817) 222-5961.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On January 5, 2001, the FAA issued Emergency AD 2001-01-51 for BHTC Model 222, 222B, 222U, 230, and 430 helicopters which requires visually inspecting the support to verify the presence of all dowel pins and sealant between the support and the transmission and verifying the proper torque of each nut. That action was prompted by the failure of a support resulting in an accident of a BHTC Model 222U helicopter. All retaining studs and shear pins were found sheared or pulled out at the junction between the support and the transmission case. This condition, if not detected, could result in failure of the support and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

The FAA has reviewed BHTC Alert Service Bulletin Nos. 222-00-86, 222U-00-57, 230-00-18, and 430-00-17, all dated May 19, 2000 (ASB's), which specify, within 25 hours time-in-service (TIS), conducting a one-time inspection of the support installation by accomplishing a torque check of the nuts. In addition, a revision to the maintenance manual will introduce a recurring torque check of the nuts. Transport Canada, which is the airworthiness authority for Canada, classified these ASB's as mandatory and issued AD No. CF-2000-29 dated September 6, 2000, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in Canada.

Since the unsafe condition described is likely to exist or develop on other BHTC Model 222, 222B, 222U, 230, and 430 helicopters of the same type

designs, the FAA issued Emergency AD 2001-01-51 to prevent failure of the support and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter. The AD requires, at specified time intervals, visually inspecting the support to verify the presence of all dowel pins and sealant between the support and transmission and verifying the proper torque of each nut. Repairing or replacing any unairworthy support, transmission case, stud, or dowel pin and retorquing to proper torque are required before further flight. The actions must be accomplished in accordance with the ASB's described previously. The short compliance time involved is required because the previously described critical unsafe condition can adversely affect the structural integrity of the helicopter. Therefore, the actions previously listed are required within 25 hours TIS, and this AD must be issued immediately.

Since it was found that immediate corrective action was required, notice and opportunity for prior public comment thereon were impracticable and contrary to the public interest, and good cause existed to make the AD effective immediately by individual letters issued on January 5, 2001, to all known U.S. owners and operators of BHTC Model 222, 222B, 222U, 230, and 430 helicopters. These conditions still exist, and the AD is hereby published in the **Federal Register** as an amendment to section 39.13 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 39.13) to make it effective to all persons.

The FAA estimates that 145 helicopters of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 1/2 work hour per helicopter to inspect for proper torque, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. The cost for the inspection is estimated to be \$4,350. Assuming 15 helicopters require removing the support for additional inspections, it would take approximately 6 additional work hours at \$60 per work hour and \$50 for parts at an additional total cost of \$410 per helicopter. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$10,500, assuming no supports have to be replaced.

Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and, thus, was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire.