

accordance with Parts 4 and 5 of the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-084, dated July 6, 1996; and accomplish paragraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this AD.

(1) Except as provided by paragraph (g) of this AD: Repair the affected structure in accordance with Part 6 of the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-084, dated July 6, 1996. And

(2) Replace all corrugated seals having P/N BE20061 (Rolls-Royce P/N 3405891) at the 7th stage low-pressure and 12th stage high-pressure check valves of the left- and right-hand bleed air systems with new, improved corrugated seals having P/N EU15969, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-36-026, Revision 1, dated July 6, 1996.

(d) As of May 14, 1998, no person shall install a corrugated seal having P/N BE20061 (Rolls-Royce P/N 3405891) on any airplane.

New Requirements for This AD

(e) For Model F.28 Mark 0070 and Mark 0100 series airplanes on which Fokker Proforma Service Bulletin SBF100-36-027, including Appendix 1, both dated March 21, 1997, has not been accomplished: Perform a visual inspection of the fuselage skin in the left- and right-hand stubwings to detect heat damage, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-087, dated November 17, 1997, at the latest of the times specified in paragraphs (e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(3) of this AD, as applicable. Repeat the inspection required by paragraph (e) of this AD thereafter at intervals not to exceed 6,000 landings.

(1) Within 6,000 landings after the effective date of this AD.

(2) Within 6 months after the effective date of this AD.

(3) Within 6,000 landings after accomplishment of the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD.

(f) If any heat damage is detected during any inspection required by paragraph (e) of this AD, prior to further flight, perform a detailed visual inspection to determine the extent of heat damage, in accordance with paragraph 2.B.(2) of the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-087, dated November 17, 1997. Except as provided by paragraph (g) of this AD, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with the service bulletin.

Note 2: Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-087, dated November 17, 1997, refers to Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-084, dated July 6, 1996, as an additional source of service information for the detailed inspection procedures, repair limits, and repair procedures.

(g) If any damage is found during accomplishment of any action specified by paragraph (c)(1) or (f) of this AD, and Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-084, dated July 6, 1996, or Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-53-087, dated November 17, 1997, specifies to contact the manufacturer for an appropriate action. Prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved

by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate; or the RLD (or its delegated agent).

(h) Installation of new heat shields, relocation of the aft bay overheat switch, and replacement of the insulation blankets of the bleed air ducts with new, improved insulation blankets, in accordance with Fokker Proforma Service Bulletin SBF100-36-027, including Appendix I, both dated March 21, 1997, constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (e) of this AD.

(i)(1) 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, International Branch, ANM-116. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116.

(i)(2) Alternative methods of compliance, approved previously in accordance with AD 98-08-01, amendment 39-10450, are approved as alternative methods of compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this AD.

(i)(3) Airplanes repaired in accordance with alternative methods of compliance, approved previously in accordance with AD 98-08-01, are not considered exempt from the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (e) of this AD.

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(j) 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.

Note 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Dutch airworthiness directive 1995-076/3 (A), dated November 28, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on November 3, 1998.

Vi L. Lipski,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-30052 Filed 11-9-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-SW-39-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Schweizer Aircraft Corporation and Hughes Helicopters, Inc. Model 269C-1 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to Schweizer Aircraft Corporation and Hughes Helicopters, Inc. (Schweizer) Model 269C-1 helicopters. This proposal would require a visual inspection of the bond line between the main rotor blade (blade) abrasion strip (abrasion strip) and the blade for voids, separation, or lifting of the abrasion strip; a visual inspection of the adhesive bead around the perimeter of the abrasion strip for erosion, cracks, or blisters; a tap (ring) test of the abrasion strip for debonding or hidden corrosion voids; and removal of any blade with an unairworthy abrasion strip and replacement with an airworthy blade. This proposal is prompted by four reports that indicate that debonding and corrosion have occurred on certain blades where the abrasion strip attaches to the blade skin. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent loss of the abrasion strip from the blade and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before January 11, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-SW-39-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Raymond Reinhardt, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, New York Aircraft Certification Office, Airframe and Propulsion Branch, Engine and Propeller Directorate, 10 Fifth Street, 3rd Floor, Valley Stream, New York 11581-1200, telephone (516) 256-7532, fax (516) 568-2716.

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, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The

proposals contained in this notice 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 comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 98-SW-39-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-SW-39-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Discussion

This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to Schweizer Model 269C-1 helicopters. This proposal would require a visual inspection of the bond line between the blade abrasion strip and the blade for voids, separation, or lifting of the abrasion strip; a visual inspection of the adhesive bead around the perimeter of the abrasion strip for erosion, cracks, or blisters; a tap (ring) test of the abrasion strip for debonding or hidden corrosion voids; and removal of any blade with an unairworthy abrasion strip and replacement with an airworthy blade. This proposal is prompted by four reports that indicate that debonding and corrosion have occurred on certain blades where the abrasion strip attaches to the blade skin. This condition, if not corrected, could result in loss of the abrasion strip from the blade and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Schweizer Model 269C-1 helicopters of the same type design, the proposed AD would require a visual inspection of the bond line between the main rotor blade abrasion strip and the blade for voids, separation, or lifting of the abrasion strip; a visual inspection of the adhesive bead around

the perimeter of the abrasion strip for erosion, cracks, or blisters; a tap (ring) test of the abrasion strip for debonding or hidden corrosion voids; and removal of any blade with an unairworthy abrasion strip and replacement with an airworthy blade. Repair of an affected blade's abrasion strip is considered a terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

The FAA estimates that 47 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately one-third of a work hour per helicopter to conduct the initial inspections; approximately one-third of a work hour to conduct the repetitive inspections; approximately 11 work hours to remove and reinstall a blade; and approximately 32 work hours to repair the blade; and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts (replacement abrasion strips) would cost approximately \$57 per main rotor abrasion strip (each helicopter has three main rotor blades). Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$65,168 per year for the first year and approximately \$64,228 for each of the next 5 years thereafter, assuming 24 of the affected blades (approximately 1/6 of the fleet or the blades on 8 helicopters) in the fleet are removed, repaired, and reinstalled with replacement abrasion strips each year, and that all affected helicopters are subjected to one repetitive inspection each year, including the first year.

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, 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 copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

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

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding a new airworthiness directive to read as follows:

Schweizer Aircraft Corporation and Hughes Helicopters, Inc.: Docket No. 98-SW-39-AD.

Applicability: Model 269C-1 helicopters with main rotor blades, P/N 269A1185-1, S/N S222, S312, S313, S325, S326, S327, S339, S341, S343, S346, S347, S349 through S367, S369 through S377, S379 through S391, S393, S394, S395, S397, S399, S401 through S417, S419 through S424, S426 through S449, S451 through S507, S509 through S513, S516 through S527, S529 through S540, S542, S544 through S560, S562 through S584, S586 through S595, S597 through S611, S620 through S623, S625, S628, S633, S641 through S644, S646, S653, S658, S664, S665, and S667, installed, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopters that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must use the authority provided in paragraph (e) to request approval from the FAA. This approval may address either no action, if the current configuration eliminates the unsafe condition, or different actions necessary to address the unsafe condition described in this AD. Such a request should include an assessment of the effect of the changed configuration on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD. In no case does the presence of any modification, alteration, or repair remove any helicopter from the applicability of this AD.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent loss of the abrasion strip from a main rotor blade (blade) and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Within the next 50 hours time-in-service (TIS), or within 90 calendar days after the effective date of this AD, whichever is earlier, or prior to installing an affected replacement blade, and thereafter at intervals

not to exceed 50 hours TIS from the date of the last inspection or replacement installation:

(1) Visually inspect the adhesive bead around the perimeter of each abrasion strip for erosion, cracks, or blisters.

(2) Visually inspect the bond line between each abrasion strip and each blade skin for voids, separation, or lifting of the abrasion strip.

(3) Inspect each abrasion strip for debonding or hidden corrosion voids using a tap (ring) test as described in the applicable maintenance manual.

(b) If any deterioration of an abrasion strip adhesive bead is discovered, prior to further flight, restore the bead in accordance with the applicable maintenance manual.

(c) If abrasion strip debonding, separation, or a hidden corrosion void is found or suspected, prior to further flight, remove the blade with the defective abrasion strip and replace it with an airworthy blade.

(d) Repair of an affected blade's abrasion strip is considered a terminating action for the requirements of this AD. Identify the repaired blade with a white dot added adjacent to the blade S/N.

(e) 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, New York Aircraft Certification Office, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, New York Aircraft Certification Office.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the New York Aircraft Certification Office.

(f) 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 helicopter to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished, provided the abrasion strip has not started to separate or debond from the main rotor blade.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on November 3, 1998.

Mark R. Schilling,

*Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-30047 Filed 11-9-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**Federal Aviation Administration (FAA),
DOT**

14 CFR Part 71

[Airspace Docket No. 97-ASW-24]

Proposed Modification to the Gulf of Mexico High Offshore Airspace Area

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This action proposes to amend the Gulf of Mexico High Offshore Airspace Area. The proposed action would extend the present airspace area east and south to the boundary of the Houston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) Flight Information Region/Control Area (FIR/CTA). Additionally, this action proposes to increase the vertical limits of the proposed airspace area from Flight Level (FL) 280 up to and including FL 600. This proposed action would provide additional airspace in which domestic air traffic procedures may be used to separate and manage aircraft operations. This proposed change would enhance the efficient utilization of that airspace.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before December 29, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send comments on the proposal in triplicate to: Manager, Air Traffic Division, ASW-500, Docket No. 97-ASW-24, Federal Aviation Administration, 2601 Meacham Boulevard, Fort Worth, TX 76193-0001.

The official docket may be examined in the Rules Docket, Office of the Chief Counsel, Room 916, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, weekdays, except Federal holidays, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

An informal docket may also be examined during normal business hours at the office of the Regional Air Traffic Division, Federal Aviation Administration, 2601 Meacham Boulevard, Fort Worth, TX 76193-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Sheri Edgett Baron, Airspace and Rules Division, ATA-400, Office of Air Traffic Airspace Management, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591; telephone: (202) 267-8783.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested parties are invited to participate in this proposed rulemaking by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Comments that provide the factual basis supporting the views and suggestions presented are particularly helpful in developing reasoned regulatory decisions on the proposal. Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, aeronautical, economic, environmental, and energy-related aspects of the proposal.

Communications should identify the airspace docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address listed above. Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments on this notice must submit

with those comments a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Airspace Docket No. 97-ASW-24." The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned to the commenter. All communications received on or before the specified closing date for comments will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposal contained in this notice may be changed in light of comments received. All comments submitted will be available for examination in the Rules Docket both before and after the closing date for comments. A report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerned with this rulemaking will be filed in the docket.

Availability of NPRM's

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the Federal Aviation Administration, Office of Air Traffic Airspace Management, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, or by calling (202) 267-8783. Communications must identify the notice number of this NPRM. Persons interested in being placed on a mailing list for future NPRM's should call the FAA's Office of Rulemaking, (202) 267-9677, for a copy of Advisory Circular No. 11-2A, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Distribution System, which describes the application procedure.

Background

On March 2, 1993, the FAA published a final rule (58 FR 12128) which, in part, redesignated certain control areas over international waters as offshore airspace areas. The redesignations were necessary to comply with the Airspace Reclassification final rule issued on December 17, 1991 (56 FR 65638).

One of the areas affected by the March 2, 1993, final rule was the Gulf of Mexico Control Area. This area was divided vertically into two areas, one of which was redesignated as the Gulf of Mexico High Offshore Airspace Area.

In June of 1996 the FAA completed an evaluation of the airspace over the Gulf of Mexico. The evaluation was a combined effort with representatives from the FAA, Servicios a la Navegacion en El Espacio Aereo Mexicano, and other airspace users. The objective of the evaluation was, in part, to identify areas where air traffic services, air traffic operations, and utilization of airspace could be improved. One conclusion of this evaluation was the determination that system capacity would be enhanced by modifying air traffic control (ATC) procedures used to control aircraft