

(1) For the Model 214B and 214B-1 helicopters,

(i) Increase the RIN by 1 for each takeoff.

(ii) Increase the RIN by 1 for each external lift, or increase the RIN by 2 for each external load lift operation in which the load is picked up at a higher elevation and released at a lower elevation, and the difference in elevation between the pickup point and the release point is 200 feet or greater.

(2) For the Model 214ST helicopters,

(i) Increase the RIN by 2 for each takeoff.

(ii) Increase the RIN by 2 for each external load lift operation, or increase the RIN by 4 for each external load lift operation in which the load is picked up at a higher elevation and released at a lower elevation, and the difference in elevation between the pickup point and the release point is 200 feet or greater.

(d) Remove the trunnion, P/N 214-010-230-101, from service on or before attaining an accumulated RIN of 120,000. The trunnion is no longer retired based upon flight hours. This AD revises the Airworthiness Limitation section of the maintenance manual by establishing a new retirement life for the trunnion of 120,000 RIN.

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

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Rotorcraft 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.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on December 4, 1996.

Eric Briese,

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

[FR Doc. 96-31523 Filed 12-11-96; 8:45 am]

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14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-NM-236-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB 2000 Series Airplanes

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 certain Saab Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes. This proposal would require a visual inspection to determine if rudder disconnection has occurred, and replacement of the disconnect unit with a new disconnect unit, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by reports that, due to the existing design, the disconnect unit of the rudder disconnect system inadvertently opened on some airplanes. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent the disconnect unit from opening inadvertently, which could lead to inadequate rudder control, if the engine fails during take-off or go-around and if the airplane is at low speed.

DATES: Comments must be received by January 22, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-NM-236-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from SAAB Aircraft AB, SAAB Aircraft Product Support, S-581.88, Linköping, Sweden. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ruth Harder, Aerospace Engineer, Standardization Branch, ANM-113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (206) 227-1721; fax (206) 227-1149.

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 shall 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 Number 96-NM-236-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, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-NM-236-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The Luftfartsverket (LFV), which is the airworthiness authority for Sweden, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Saab Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes. The LFV advises that it has received reports that the disconnect unit of the rudder control system was found opened on some in-service airplanes. Investigation revealed that the existing design of the disconnect unit, having part number (P/N) 7327305-511 or -512, may allow it to inadvertently open without the disconnect handle being pulled. This condition, if not corrected, could result in the disconnection of the left and right rudder pedals; this situation could lead to inadequate rudder control, if the engine fails during take-off or go-around and if the airplane is at low speed.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Saab has issued Alert Service Bulletin 2000-A27-020, dated March 25, 1996, which describes procedures for performing a visual inspection to determine if rudder disconnection has occurred. For cases where disconnection has occurred, this service bulletin also describes procedures for replacement of the discrepant disconnect unit with a new disconnect unit having P/N 7327299-661.

Saab also has issued Service Bulletin 2000-27-021, Revision 1, dated June 19, 1996, which describes procedures for replacement of disconnect units, having P/N 7327305-511 or -512, with a new disconnect unit having P/N 7327305-513 or 7327299-661.

The LFV classified these service bulletins as mandatory and issued

Swedish airworthiness directives (SAD) 1-095, dated March 25, 1996, and 1-096R1, dated June 19, 1996 in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in Sweden.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in Sweden and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the LfV has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the LfV, 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.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require a visual inspection to determine if rudder disconnection has occurred, and, if so, the immediate replacement of the disconnect unit with a new unit. The new unit would be required to be installed eventually on all affected airplanes. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletins described previously.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 3 Saab Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 7 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the manufacturer at no cost to operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$1,260, or \$420 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

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 the following new airworthiness directive:

SAAB Aircraft AB: Docket 96-NM-236-AD.

Applicability: Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes, serial number 004 through 035 inclusive, equipped with a disconnect unit having part number (P/N) 7327305-511 or -512; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane 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

airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (b) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent the disconnect unit from opening inadvertently, which could lead to inadequate rudder control, if the engine fails during take-off or go-around and if the airplane is at low speed, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, perform a visual inspection to determine if rudder disconnection has occurred, in accordance with Saab Alert Service Bulletin 2000-A27-020, dated March 25, 1996.

(1) If no disconnection has occurred, within 6 months after the effective date of this AD, replace the disconnect unit with a new disconnect unit, in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 2000-27-021, Revision 1, dated June 19, 1996. After replacement, no further action is required by this AD.

(2) If disconnection has occurred, prior to further flight, replace the disconnect unit with a new disconnect unit, in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 2000-27-021, Revision 1, dated June 19, 1996. After replacement, no further action is required by this AD.

(b) 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, Standardization Branch, ANM-113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Standardization Branch, ANM-113.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Standardization Branch, ANM-113.

(c) 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.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on December 5, 1996.

S. R. Miller,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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