

intake, or turbine casing drain during rundown and after every engine shutdown. If a smoke emission has been noticed, check the fuel system before the next flight to identify the origin of the smoke emissions.

(2) If smoke is not detected, no action is required until the next engine ground shutdown.

(3) If smoke is detected, inspect for fuel flow in accordance with paragraph 2.B.(1) and 2.B.(2) of the SB.

(i) If fuel flow is not detected, prior to further flight, remove the engine from service and replace with a serviceable engine.

(ii) If fuel flow is detected, remove the electric fuel cock from service and replace with a serviceable part in accordance with section 2.B.(4) and 2.B.(5) of the referenced SB.

(iii) Before entry into service, perform an engine ground run and check the fuel system again for smoke emissions through the exhaust pipe, air intake, or turbine casing drain during engine rundown and after shutdown; if smoke emissions still remain after replacement of the electric fuel cock, prior to further flight, remove the engine from service and replace with a serviceable engine.

(b) For the purpose of this AD, a serviceable engine is defined as an engine that does not exhibit smoke emissions.

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, Engine Certification Office. Operators shall submit their request through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Engine Certification Office.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this airworthiness directive, if any, may be obtained from the Engine Certification Office.

Ferry Flights

(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 rotorcraft to a location where the inspection requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Burlington, Massachusetts, on December 1, 1999.

Thomas A. Boudreau,

Acting Manager, Engine and Propeller Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 99-31814 Filed 12-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99-SW-54-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters Inc. Model MD600N Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) applicable to MD Helicopters Inc. (MDHI) Model MD600N helicopters. This proposal would require inspecting each internal fuel hose connection to verify proper installation. This proposal is prompted by the discovery that certain fuel hose connections between the fuel cells and the engine can be incorrectly installed. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent fuel starvation of the engine while the fuel gage indicates fuel remaining in the tank, engine flameout, and a subsequent forced landing.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before February 7, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99-SW-54-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.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from MD Helicopters Inc., Attn: Customer Support Division, 5000 E. McDowell Rd., Mail Stop M615-GO48, Mesa, Arizona 85215-9797, telephone 1-800-388-3378 or 480-891-6342, datafax 480-891-6782. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bruce Conze, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Blvd., Lakewood, California 90712, telephone (562) 627-5261, fax (562) 627-5210.

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. 99-SW-54-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. 99-SW-54-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Discussion

This document proposes the adoption of a new AD applicable to MDHI Model MD600N helicopters, serial numbers with a prefix of "RN" 003 through 045. This AD would require inspecting each internal fuel hose connection to verify appropriate installation. The manufacturer discovered, during a company production flight test, that certain fuel hose connections between the fuel cells and the engine were incorrectly installed. The manufacturer is currently attempting to develop new hoses that would eliminate the possibility of incorrectly installing the internal fuel hose connections. Such hoses, if developed, would replace the hoses currently in use. In the interim, a one-time inspection of each internal fuel hose connection for proper installation is necessary within 100 hours TIS. This condition, if not corrected, could result in fuel starvation of the engine while the gage indicates fuel remaining in the

tank, engine flameout, and a subsequent forced landing.

The FAA has reviewed MDHI Service Bulletin SB600N-025, dated July 2, 1999, which describes procedures for inspecting the fuel system to verify proper fuel line connections between the fuel cells and the engine.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other MDHI Model MD600N helicopters of the same type design, the proposed AD would require inspecting the internal fuel hose connections to ensure appropriate installation. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

The FAA estimates that 40 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 8 work hours per helicopter to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$19,200.

The regulations adopted herein will not impose substantial direct compliance costs on states or local governments or 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 13132, the FAA has not consulted with States or local authorities prior to the publication of this notice.

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:

MD Helicopters, Inc.: Docket No. 99-SW-54.

Applicability: Model MD600N helicopters, serial numbers with a prefix of "RN" 003 through 045, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise 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 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 fuel starvation of the engine while the fuel gage indicates fuel remaining in the tank, engine flameout, and a subsequent forced landing, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 100 hours time-in-service, verify that the internal fuel hose connections have been properly installed in accordance with either Method A or Method B of the Accomplishment Instructions of MD Helicopters Service Bulletin SB 600N-025, dated July 2, 1999 (ASB). Prior to further flight, make any necessary corrections.

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

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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 1, 1999.

Henry A. Armstrong,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 99-31817 Filed 12-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

20 CFR Part 222

RIN 3220-AB40

Family Relationships

AGENCY: Railroad Retirement Board.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Railroad Retirement Board (Board) proposes to amend its regulations on determining whether a natural child has inheritance rights under appropriate state law and therefore may be entitled to railroad retirement benefits as the child of an insured employee. The Board also proposes to clarify its regulation regarding status as a legally adopted child of an insured employee. Such revisions are necessary because of a change in the regulations of the Social Security Administration, which became effective November 27, 1998.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before February 7, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to the Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2092.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas W. Sadler, Senior Attorney, (312) 751-4513, TDD (312) 751-4701.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 2(d)(4) of the Railroad Retirement Act (RRA) references section 216(h) of the Social Security Act for purposes of determining whether an individual is the child of the insured employee for entitlement to a surviving child's annuity. In addition, the Board must look to the Social Security Act to determine the status of a child for increasing a disability annuitant's annuity under the social security overall minimum provided in section 3(f)(3) of the RRA. See part 229 of this chapter. Section 216(h)(2)(A) of the Social Security Administration (SSA) looks to the law of the state in which the wage earner was domiciled regarding the devolution of intestate personal property to determine who would be a child for inheritance purposes.

The SSA has announced final regulations which revise its procedures