

to increase the labor rate used in these calculations from \$60 per work hour to \$65 per work hour. The cost impact information, below, reflects this increase in the specified hourly labor rate.

#### Cost Impact

There are approximately 2,919 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 1,129 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD. The FAA estimates that it would take approximately 2 work hours for each airplane specified as Group 1 in the referenced service bulletin, and approximately 1 work hour for each airplane specified as Group 2 in the referenced service bulletin, to accomplish the proposed actions; the average labor rate is estimated to be \$65 per work hour. Parts and materials are standard and are to be supplied by the operator. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$130 per Group 1 airplane, and \$65 per Group 2 airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are 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 proposed AD were not adopted. The cost impact figures discussed in AD rulemaking actions represent only the time necessary to perform the specific actions actually required by the AD. These figures typically do not include incidental costs, such as the time required to gain access and close up, planning time, or time necessitated by other administrative actions. The manufacturer may cover the cost of replacement parts associated with this proposed AD, subject to warranty conditions. Manufacturer warranty remedies may also be available for labor costs associated with this proposed AD. As a result, the costs attributable to the proposed AD may be less than stated above.

#### Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have a substantial direct effect 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, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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:

**Boeing:** Docket 2001–NM–156–AD.

**Applicability:** Model 737–100, –200, –200C, –300, –400, and –500 series airplanes, as listed in Boeing Service Bulletin 737–25–1434, dated March 22, 2001; certificated in any category.

**Compliance:** Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent the latch cable assembly from disconnecting from the latch block assembly of the door mounted escape slides, which could result in an escape slide not deploying in an emergency situation, accomplish the following:

#### Replacement

(a) Within 18 months after the effective date of this AD, replace the existing screw, nut, and washers that attach the latch cable assembly to the latch block assembly of the door mounted escape slides, with the new, improved screw, nut, and washers; per the Work Instructions of Boeing Service Bulletin 737–25–1434, dated March 22, 2001.

#### Parts Installation

(b) As of the effective date of this AD, no person may install a nut, part number (P/N) BACN10R10L, that was removed from any airplane; or install a screw, P/N NAS623–3–8; on any airplane.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(c)(1) In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance (AMOC) for this AD.

(2) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for repair of the latch cable assembly and the latch block assembly for the door mounted escape slide, if it is approved by a Boeing Company Designated Engineering Representative (DER) who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make such findings.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on September 11, 2003.

**Vi L. Lipski,**

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

[FR Doc. 03–23822 Filed 9–17–03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–13–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002–SW–45–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS332C, L, and L1 Helicopters

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking (SNPRM); reopening of comment period.

**SUMMARY:** This document revises an earlier proposed airworthiness directive (AD) for the specified Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) model helicopters that would have required, for bevel gears with more than 6,600 hours time-in-service (TIS), inspecting the bevel gear for a crack using a borescope within 50 hours TIS, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 150 hours TIS. That proposal was prompted by a crack that was detected on a bevel gear during a main gearbox teardown inspection. This action revises the proposed rule by requiring the borescope inspection at intervals not to exceed 150 hours TIS or 1,000 torque variation cycles (cycles) for helicopter operations involving frequent torque variations, whichever occurs first. This action is prompted by an analysis of the crack growth rate, which indicates that the growth rate is higher in helicopters with operations involving a torque variation frequency of 4 or more cycles per hour. The actions specified by this proposed AD are intended to detect a bevel gear crack and prevent failure of the bevel gear,

loss of torque to the main rotor system, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before November 17, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002–SW–45–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](mailto:9-asw-adcomments@faa.gov). Comments may be inspected at the Office of the Regional Counsel between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Uday Garadi, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Safety Management Group, Fort Worth, Texas 76193–0110, telephone (817) 222–5123, fax (817) 222–5961.

#### 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 document 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 mailed comments submitted in response to this proposal must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 2002–SW–45–AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

#### Discussion

A proposal to amend 14 CFR part 39 to add an AD for the specified Eurocopter model helicopters was published in the **Federal Register** on December 31, 2002 (67 FR 79893). That NPRM would have required for bevel gears with more than 6,600 hours TIS, inspecting the bevel gear for cracks using a borescope within 50 hours TIS, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 150 hours TIS. If a crack were found in the bevel gear, replacing the bevel gear would be required. That NPRM was prompted by a crack that was detected on a bevel gear during a main gearbox teardown inspection. That condition, if not corrected, could result in failure of the bevel gear, loss of torque to the main rotor system, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

Since issuing that NPRM, the FAA discovered that certain part numbered bevel gears were omitted from the applicability and one was incorrectly stated in that NPRM. Also, the manufacturer has revised the service information to introduce the new inspection interval of 1,000 cycles for helicopter operations involving a torque application frequency of more than 4 cycles per hour for helicopters that conduct external load operations involving more frequent torque applications. Additionally, we inadvertently included Model AS332C1 helicopters in the "Applicability" section of the NPRM—those model helicopters are not on the U.S. Registry. Finally, the DGAC has issued a revised AD for helicopters operated in France.

This SNPRM revises the NPRM to:

- Correct the basic bevel gear part number (P/N) stated in the "Applicability" of the NPRM to state "332A32–2181–00";
- Add bevel gear P/Ns 332A32–2181–01 and –08 to the "Applicability";
- Delete the Model AS332C1 helicopters from the "Applicability";
- Incorporate the latest Eurocopter Alert Telex and references the latest DGAC AD;
- Require the repetitive inspection at intervals not to exceed 150 hours TIS or 1,000 torque cycles, whichever occurs first; and
- Exclude from the "Applicability" any main gearbox (regardless of the P/N of the main reduction gear module or bevel gear) overhauled after December 31, 2002, and any part number inspected in accordance with AS332 letter to Repair Stations No. 183 or repaired in accordance with Repair Sheet (F.R.) 332A32–2181–ZA or 331A32–3110–ZA.

Since this change expands the scope of the originally proposed rule, we have

determined that it is necessary to reopen the comment period to provide additional opportunity for public comment.

The Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (DGAC), the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Eurocopter Model AS332C, C1, L, and L1 helicopters, equipped with main gearbox main reduction gear modules, part numbers (P/N) 332A32–2027–00 or 332A32–2026–00, containing bevel gears, P/N 332A32–2181–00, –01, –02, –03, or –04, or 331A32–3110–07, –09, or –19. The DGAC advises that borescope inspections of the bevel gear are necessary to detect cracks.

Eurocopter has issued Alert Telex No. 05.00.58 R2, dated February 3, 2003, which indicates that as a result of metal particles found on the chip detector of the main gearbox sump on a helicopter, further investigation has revealed a longitudinal crack that grows lengthwise in the shaft, up to the combiner gear, in the bevel gear where the ring retains the pinion toe bearing. The alert telex specifies inspecting the bevel gear for cracks using a borescope, pending the result of the investigation into the cause of the fatigue crack initiation currently being conducted in France. The DGAC classified this alert telex as mandatory and issued AD 2002–424–081(A) R2, dated March 19, 2003, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in France.

On July 10, 2002, the FAA issued a new version of 14 CFR part 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs the FAA's AD system. The regulation now includes material that relates to altered products, special flight permits, and alternative methods of compliance. Because we have now included this material in part 39, we no longer need to include it in each individual AD. Therefore, Note 1 of the original NPRM has been removed and paragraph (c) has been modified in this SNPRM.

The FAA estimates that 4 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 4 work hours per helicopter to accomplish the inspections and 16 work hours per helicopter to replace the bevel gear. The average labor rate is \$65 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$31,372. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$130,688, assuming that upon the first inspection a crack is detected and the bevel gear will be replaced.

The regulations proposed herein would not have a substantial direct

effect 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, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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:

**Eurocopter France:** Docket No. 2002–SW–45–AD.

**Applicability:** Model AS332C, L, and L1 helicopters, with main gearbox bevel gear (bevel gear), part numbers (P/N) 332A32–2027–00 or 332A32–2026–00, containing bevel gears, P/N 332A32–2181–00, –01, –02, –03, or –04, or 331A32–3110–07, –08, –09, or –19, installed, certificated in any category. This AD does not apply to:

- Main gearboxes that were overhauled after December 31, 2002;
- Parts inspected in accordance with AS332 letter to Repair Stations No. 183; or
- Parts repaired in accordance with Repair Sheet (F.R.) 332A32–2181–ZA or 331A32–3110–ZA.

**Compliance:** Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To detect a bevel gear crack and prevent failure of the bevel gear, loss of torque to the

main rotor system, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) For bevel gears that have more than 6,600 hours time-in-service (TIS), within 50 hours TIS and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 150 hours TIS, or at intervals not to exceed 1,000 frequent torque variation cycles, whichever occurs first, inspect for a crack using a boroscope in accordance with the Operational Procedure, paragraph 2.B.1. and 2.B.2. of Eurocopter Telex No. 05.00.58 R2, dated February 3, 2003. A frequent torque variation cycle is each landing or external load operation beginning at the point when there are 4 or more landings, or 4 or more external load operations, or any combination of 4 or more landings and external load operations in any 60 minute time period, and ending when any combination of landings and external load operations is less than 4 in any 60 minute time period.

(b) If a crack is found in the bevel gear, before further flight, replace the bevel gear with an airworthy bevel gear.

(c) To request a different method of compliance or a different compliance time for this AD, follow the procedures in 14 CFR 39.19. Contact the Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, for information about previously approved alternative methods of compliance.

**Note:** The subject of this AD is addressed in Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (France) AD 2002–424–081(A) R2, dated March 19, 2003.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on September 8, 2003.

**David A. Downey,**

*Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 03–23835 Filed 9–17–03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–13–P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

#### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003–SW–24–AD]

**RIN 2120–AA64**

#### Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS355E, F, F1, F2, and N Helicopters

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for the specified Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) model helicopters. This proposal would revise the Limitations section of the Rotorcraft Flight Manual (RFM) to prohibit using the landing light except for landing and takeoff until the 40 amp 10 P1 and 10P2 contactors

are replaced with 50 amp circuit breakers. Also, this proposal would require upgrading the electrical master boxes. This proposal is prompted by three reports of complete loss of electrical power generating systems, except for the direct battery power, due to a combination of high outside temperature and long flight duration with the landing light on that causes the nontemperature compensated trip switches to prematurely trip. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the helicopter power generator systems, loss of the use of flight instruments, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before November 17, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003–SW–24–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. Comments may be inspected at the Office of the Regional Counsel between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Carroll Wright, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Regulations and Guidance Group, Fort Worth, Texas 76193–0111, telephone (817) 222–5120, fax (817) 222–5961.

#### 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 document 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