



**[4910-13-P]**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2016-3257; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-072-AD]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

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

**SUMMARY:** We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (Airbus Helicopters) MBB-BK 117 D-2 helicopters. This proposed AD would require repetitively inspecting the bushings of the inner and outer forward trusses of both engines. This proposed AD is prompted by reports of delaminated and worn engine mount bushings. The proposed actions are intended to detect delaminated engine mount bushings, which can lead to excessive vibration, cracking, failure of the engine mount front support pins, and loss of helicopter control.

**DATES:** We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Docket:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- **Fax:** 202-493-2251.

- Mail: Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2016-3257; or in person at the Docket Operations Office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations Office (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at <http://www.airbushelicopters.com/techpub>.

You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Matt Fuller, Senior Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email [matthew.fuller@faa.gov](mailto:matthew.fuller@faa.gov).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Comments Invited**

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

### **Discussion**

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD No. 2015-0198, dated September 30, 2015, to correct an unsafe condition for Airbus Helicopters Model MBB-BK 117 D-2 helicopters. EASA advises that during a pre-flight check of an MBB-BK 117 D-2 helicopter, an engine mount bushing was found delaminated. More cases of delaminated engine mount bushings were reported following additional investigations. According to EASA, this

condition could lead to cracks and eventually failure of the engine mount front support pins, possibly resulting in loss of helicopter control.

The EASA AD consequently requires repetitive inspections of the engine mount bushings and depending of the findings, repairing or replacing the bushings.

### **FAA's Determination**

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of Germany and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with Germany, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

### **Related Service Information**

We reviewed Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) MBB-BK117 D-2-71A-002, Revision 0, dated September 28, 2015, for Model MBB-BK 117 D-2 helicopters. The ASB introduces repetitive visual inspections of the engine mount bushings for defects, deformation, separation of the rubber, and missing rubber after reports of delaminated engine mount bushings and bushings with damage to the metal inner sleeve. If there is any deformation or separation of the rubber, the ASB specifies performing a detailed inspection of the bushing in accordance with the aircraft maintenance manual.

### **Proposed AD Requirements**

This proposed AD would require within 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) and at intervals not to exceed 50 hours TIS thereafter, visually inspecting the bushings of the

inner and outer forward trusses of both engines, and depending on the outcome of the inspections, replacing or repairing the bushings before further flight.

### **Differences between this Proposed AD and the EASA AD**

The EASA AD allows for a 10 hour time-in-service, non-cumulative tolerance for its required compliance times. This proposed AD would not.

### **Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 5 helicopters of U.S. Registry and that labor costs average \$85 per work hour. Based on these estimates, we expect the following costs:

- Inspecting the bushings would require 1 work hour. No parts would be needed, for a total cost of \$85 per helicopter and \$425 for the U.S. fleet.
- Replacing a bushing would require 1 work hour and \$373 for parts, for a total cost of \$458 per bushing.

### **Authority for This Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority

because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

### **Regulatory Findings**

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD 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.

For the reasons discussed, I certify 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);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and
4. 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.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

### **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

**Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH:** Docket No. FAA-2016-3257; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-072-AD.

#### **(a) Applicability**

This AD applies to Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK 117 D-2 helicopters with a bushing part number 105-60386 installed, certificated in any category.

#### **(b) Unsafe Condition**

This AD defines the unsafe condition as a delaminated engine mount bushing. This condition could result in excessive vibration, which could lead to cracking and failure of the engine mount front support pins, and loss of helicopter control.

#### **(c) Comments Due Date**

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE Federal Register].

#### **(d) Compliance**

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

**(e) Required Actions**

Within 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 50 hours TIS:

(1) Visually inspect each engine mount bushing (bushing) for separation of the rubber from the metal or missing rubber.

(2) If any rubber has separated from the metal or if there is missing rubber, inspect the bushing for deformation, corrosion, and mechanical damage.

(i) Replace the bushing with an airworthy bushing if there is any deformation, separation of the rubber from the metal, corrosion, or mechanical damage, or repair the bushing if the deformation, separation of the rubber, corrosion, or mechanical damage is within the maximum repair damage limitations.

(ii) If the inner and outer parts of the bushing are separated with missing rubber, replace the bushing with an airworthy bushing.

**(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)**

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Group, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Matt Fuller, Senior Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email 9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

**(g) Additional Information**

(1) Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin ASB MBB-BK117 D-2-71A-002, Revision 0, dated September 28, 2015, which is not incorporated by reference, contains additional information about the subject of this proposed rule. For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at <http://www.airbushelicopters.com/techpub>. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

(2) The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2015-0198, dated September 30, 2015. You may view the EASA AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> in the AD Docket.

**(h) Subject**

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 7200, Engine  
(Turbine, Turboprop).

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on November 10, 2016.

Lance T. Gant,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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