



**[4910-13-P]**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2018-0237; Product Identifier 2017-SW-145-AD; Amendment 39-19254; AD 2018-08-01]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters**

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

**ACTION:** Final rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Airbus Helicopters Model EC225LP helicopters. This AD requires inspecting each main rotor rotating swashplate (swashplate) control rod attachment yoke (yoke). This AD is prompted by a finding that the yoke is susceptible to cracking. The actions of this AD are intended to address an unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** This AD becomes effective [INSERT DATE 15 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain document listed in this AD as of [INSERT DATE 15 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

We must receive comments on this 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-2018-0237; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, any incorporated-by-reference service information, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (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 final 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.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support\\_73.html](http://www.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support_73.html). 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. It is also available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0237.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Matt Fuller, Senior Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, 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**

This AD is a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety, and we did not provide you with notice and an opportunity to provide your comments prior to it becoming effective. However, 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 resulted from adopting this AD. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the AD, 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 them 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 rulemaking during the comment period. We will consider all the comments we receive and may conduct additional rulemaking based on those comments.

## **Discussion**

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD No. 2017-0191R2, dated December 15, 2017, to correct an unsafe condition for Airbus Helicopters Model EC 225 LP helicopters with swashplate part number (P/N) 332A31-3074-00 or P/N 332A31-3074-01 installed. EASA advises of a finding by Airbus Helicopters that the yoke is susceptible to cracking due to strain aging of the metal. EASA advises that this condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to structural failure of a yoke, possibly resulting in loss of control of the helicopter.

Accordingly, the EASA AD requires, for swashplates that are seven or more years old, a recurring inspection of the five yokes for a crack and a one-time inspection of the yokes for corrosion and a crack. If there is a crack or corrosion on a yoke, the EASA AD requires replacing the swashplate or repairing and reworking the yokes.

## **FAA's Determination**

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

## **Related Service Information Under 1 CFR part 51**

Airbus Helicopters has issued one document that co-publishes two Emergency Alert Service Bulletin (EASB) identification numbers: No. 05A051 for Model EC225LP helicopters and No. 05A046 for non-FAA type-certificated Model EC725AP helicopters,

both Revision 1 and both dated November 16, 2017. Airbus Helicopters EASB No. 05A051 is incorporated by reference in this AD. Airbus Helicopters EASB No. 05A046 is not incorporated by reference in this AD.

This service information specifies inspections for certain serial-numbered swashplate P/N 332A31-3074-00 and P/N 332A31-3074-01. This service information specifies a repetitive inspection of the yokes for a crack and a one-time inspection of the stripped yokes for corrosion and a crack. If in doubt about whether there is a crack, this service information specifies performing a non-destructive inspection. This service information also specifies touching up the swashplate if there is corrosion, removing any damage within allowable limits, and refinishing the yokes. If there is a crack in a yoke, this service information specifies replacing the swashplate.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

### **AD Requirements**

This AD requires a repetitive visual inspection of the five yokes for a crack every 15 hours time-in-service (TIS), and replacing the swashplate if there is a crack in any of the yokes.

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

The EASA AD specifies performing a non-destructive inspection if in doubt about if there is a crack and removing damage within allowable limits, whereas this AD does not. The EASA AD also specifies stripping the yokes and performing a one-time inspection within 100 hours TIS for corrosion and a crack, and this AD does not. We plan

to publish a notice of proposed rulemaking to give the public an opportunity to comment on this long-term requirement.

### **Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this AD affects 5 helicopters of U.S. Registry. We estimate that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD. Labor costs are estimated at \$85 per work-hour.

Inspecting the yokes takes about 0.25 work-hour for an estimated cost of \$21 per helicopter and \$105 for the U.S. fleet per inspection cycle. Replacing a swashplate takes about 6 work-hours and parts cost about \$82,000 for an estimated cost of \$82,510 per helicopter.

### **FAA's Justification and Determination of the Effective Date**

An unsafe condition exists that requires the immediate adoption of this AD without providing an opportunity for public comments prior to adoption. The FAA has found that the risk to the flying public justifies waiving notice and comment prior to adoption of this rule because the required corrective action must be completed within 15 hours TIS. Therefore, we find good cause that notice and opportunity for prior public comment are impracticable. In addition, for the reason stated above, we find that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

### **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 AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will 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 that this AD:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under 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 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.

### **Adoption of the Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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):

2018-08-01 **Airbus Helicopters:** Amendment 39-19254; Docket No. FAA-2018-0237; Product Identifier 2017-SW-145-AD.

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

This AD applies to Model EC225LP helicopters, certificated in any category, with a main rotor (M/R) rotating swashplate (swashplate) part number (P/N) 332A31-3074-00 or P/N 332A31-3074-01 with a serial number listed in Appendix 4.A. of Airbus Helicopters Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05A051, Revision 1, dated November 16, 2017 (EASB 05A051).

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

This AD defines the unsafe condition as a crack in a swashplate control rod attachment yoke (yoke). This condition could result in failure of the yoke, loss of M/R control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**(c) Effective Date**

This AD becomes effective [INSERT DATE 15 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 15 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 15 hours TIS, visually inspect each yoke for a crack, paying particular attention to the areas shown in Details B, C, and D of Figure 1 of EASB 05A051. If there is a crack on a yoke, before further flight, replace the swashplate.

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

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Matt Fuller, Senior Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, 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**

The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2017-0191R2, dated December 15, 2017. You may view the EASA AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating it in Docket No. FAA-2018-0237.

**(h) Subject**

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 6230 Main Rotor Mast/Swashplate.

**(i) Material Incorporated by Reference**

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Airbus Helicopters Emergency Alert Service Bulletin (EASB) No. 05A051, Revision 1, dated November 16, 2017.

Note 1 to paragraph (i)(2)(i): Airbus Helicopters EASB No. 05A051, Revision 1, dated November 16, 2017, is co-published as one document along with Airbus Helicopters EASB No. 05A046, Revision 1, dated November 16, 2017, which is not incorporated by reference in this AD.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For Airbus Helicopter's service information identified in this AD, 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.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support\\_73.html](http://www.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support_73.html).

(4) You may view this service information at FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call (202) 741-6030, or go to:

<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on April 11, 2018.

Scott A. Horn,

Deputy Director for Regulatory Operations,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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