



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2020-1165; Project Identifier 2019-SW-027-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters

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

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

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Helicopters Model SA341G and SA342J helicopters. This proposed AD was prompted by the determination that a new life limit was necessary for certain tail rotor blades (TRBs). This proposed AD would require replacing certain TRBs, re-identifying certain TRBs, and repairing certain other TRBs, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

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

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

For material that will be incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); Internet [www.easa.europa.eu](http://www.easa.europa.eu). You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this IBR material at the 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. It is also available in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2020-1165.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2020-1165; 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 NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Blaine Williams, Aerospace Engineer, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, California, 90712; telephone (562) 627-5371; email [blaine.williams@faa.gov](mailto:blaine.williams@faa.gov).

### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### **Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2020-1165; Project Identifier 2019-SW-027-AD” at the beginning of

your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this proposal.

### **Confidential Business Information**

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as "PROPIN." The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Blaine Williams, Aerospace Engineer, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, California, 90712; telephone (562) 627-5371; email [blaine.williams@faa.gov](mailto:blaine.williams@faa.gov). Any commentary that the FAA receives that is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

### **Discussion**

The EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2019-0034, dated February 14, 2019 (EASA AD

2019-0034) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus Helicopters Model SA341G and SA342J helicopters.

This proposed AD was prompted by the determination that a new life limit was necessary for TRBs that were manufactured without a new process that affects the structural characteristics. The FAA is proposing this AD to address TRBs that might break, resulting in loss of tail rotor control and consequent loss of control of the helicopter. See the MCAI for additional background information.

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

EASA AD 2019-0034 describes procedures for replacing TRBs having certain part numbers, re-identifying TRBs having a certain part number and certain serial numbers, and repairing TRBs that have been reworked/repared/modified before being re-identified.

This material 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.

### **FAA's Determination and Requirements of this Proposed AD**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, the FAA has been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is proposing this AD because the FAA evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

## **Proposed AD Requirements**

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2019-0034, described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD.

## **Explanation of Required Compliance Information**

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA initially worked with Airbus and EASA to develop a process to use certain EASA ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has since coordinated with other manufacturers and civil aviation authorities (CAAs) to use this process. As a result, EASA AD 2019-0034 will be incorporated by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2019-0034 in its entirety, through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in the EASA AD does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to "all required actions and compliance times," compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled "Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)" in the EASA AD. Service information specified in EASA AD 2019-0034 that is required for compliance with EASA AD 2019-0034 will be available on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2020-1165 after the FAA final rule is published.

## **Costs of Compliance**

The FAA estimates that this proposed AD affects 20 helicopters of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

### Estimated costs for required actions

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
1 work-hour X \$85 per hour = \$85	\$3,900	\$3,985	\$79,700

#### 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.

The FAA is 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

The FAA 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 above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(3) 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.

**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:

**Airbus Helicopters:** Docket No. FAA-2020-1165; Project Identifier 2019-SW-027-AD.

**(a) Comments Due Date**

The FAA must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**(b) Affected Airworthiness Directives (ADs)**

None.

**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to Airbus Helicopters Model SA341G and SA342J helicopters, certificated in any category, equipped with any tail rotor blade (TRB) specified in paragraph (c)(1) or (2) of this AD.

(1) An affected part as defined in European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2019-0034, dated February 14, 2019 (EASA AD 2019-0034).

(2) A TRB having part number (P/N) 341A335101.01, P/N 341A335130.05, or P/N 341A335130.06.

**(d) Subject**

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code 6410, Tail Rotor Blades.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by the determination that a new life limit was necessary for TRBs that were manufactured without a new process that affects the structural characteristics. The FAA is issuing this AD to address TRBs that might break, resulting in loss of tail rotor control and consequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Requirements**

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2019-0034.

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2019-0034**

(1) Where EASA AD 2019-0034 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2019-0034 does not apply to this AD.

(3) Where EASA AD 2019-0034 refers to flight hours (FH), this AD requires using hours time-in-service.

(4) Where paragraph (4) of EASA AD 2019-0034 specifies to contact the manufacturer, for this AD, repair using a method approved by the Manager, Strategic Policy Rotorcraft Section, FAA. For a repair method to be approved by the Manager, Strategic Policy Rotorcraft Section, as required by this paragraph, the Manager’s approval letter must specifically refer to this AD.

(5) Where paragraph (5) of EASA AD 2019-0034 specifies it must be determined that the rework/repair/modification is valid for part number 341A335130.06, for this AD, rework/repair/modification of an affected part is prohibited.

**(i) Special Flight Permit**

Special flight permits, as described in 14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199, are not allowed.

**(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):**

The Manager, Strategic Policy Rotorcraft Section, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Manager, Strategic Policy Rotorcraft Section, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone 817-222-5110; email 9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

**(k) Related Information**

(1) For EASA AD 2019-0034, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this material at the 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. This material may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2020-1165.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Blaine Williams, Aerospace Engineer, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, California, 90712; telephone (562) 627-5371; email [blaine.williams@faa.gov](mailto:blaine.williams@faa.gov).

Issued on December 17, 2020.

Lance T. Gant, Director,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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