



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2025-0006; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00803-R]

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 Airbus Helicopters Model AS350B, AS350BA, AS350B1, AS350B2, AS350B3, AS350D, AS355E, AS355F, AS355F1, AS355F2, AS355N, and AS355NP helicopters. This proposed AD was prompted by a report of a sliding door that was locked in the open position detaching from the helicopter during flight. This proposed AD would require modifying certain upper rail rollers, installing a label on each sliding door, and prohibit installing affected upper rail rollers or a door having an affected upper rail roller. These actions are 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 NPRM 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 [regulations.gov](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.

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2025-0006; 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, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- For EASA material identified in this proposed AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; phone: +49 221 8999 000; email: ADs@easa.europa.eu; website: easa.europa.eu. You may find the EASA material on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

- You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110. The EASA material is also available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2025-0006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Adam Hein, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (316) 946-4116; email: Adam.Hein@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 the ADDRESSES section.

Include “Docket No. FAA-2025-0006; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00803-R” 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 regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

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 Adam Hein, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (316) 946-4116; email: Adam.Hein@faa.gov. Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Background

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2023-0131, dated July 3, 2023 (EASA AD 2023-0131) (also referred to as the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition on Airbus Helicopters Model AS 350 B, AS 350 D, AS 350 BA, AS 350 BB, AS 350 B1, AS 350 B2, AS 350 B3, AS 355 E, AS 355 F, AS 355 F1, AS 355 F2, AS 355 N, and AS 355 NP helicopters if equipped with a left-hand (LH) and/or right-hand sliding door. The MCAI states that a LH sliding door of a Model AS 350 B3 helicopter was lost while flying with the door locked in the open position. Design review determined that the upper rail roller had a single locking device instead of two separate locking devices, which is required for that type of fastener.

This proposed AD would apply to Model AS350B, AS350BA, AS350B1, AS350B2, AS350D, AS355E, AS355F, AS355F1, AS355F2, AS355N, and AS355NP helicopters because they are also affected by this unsafe condition due to design similarity.

The FAA is proposing this AD to address the insufficient upper rail roller locking mechanism of the sliding door. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could lead to the sliding door detaching from the helicopter during flight, and subsequent damage to the helicopter and injury to persons on the ground.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2025-0006.

Material Incorporated by Reference under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed EASA AD 2023-0131, which requires modifying affected upper rail rollers and installing a label on each sliding door. EASA AD 2023-0131 also prohibits installing an affected upper rail roller, or a door having an affected upper rail roller installed, on any helicopter. 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

These products have been approved by the aviation authority of another country and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA’s bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA about the unsafe condition described in the MCAI. The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of these same type designs.

Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2023-0131, described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD and except as discussed under “Differences Between This NPRM and the MCAI.”

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA’s ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA) ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, the FAA proposes to incorporate EASA AD 2023-0131 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2023-0131 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 EASA AD 2023-0131 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 EASA AD 2023-0131. Material required by EASA AD 2023-0131 for compliance will be available at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2025-0006 after the FAA final rule is published.

Differences Between This NPRM and the MCAI

EASA AD 2023-0131 applies to Model AS350BB helicopters, whereas this proposed AD would not because that model is not FAA-type certificated.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 972 helicopters of U.S. registry. Labor rates are estimated at \$85 per work-hour. Based on these numbers, the FAA estimates that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this proposed AD.

Modifying the upper rail rollers and installing a label on the sliding doors (up to two doors per helicopter) would take up to 8 work-hours and parts would cost \$2,668 for an estimated cost of up to \$3,348 per helicopter and \$3,254,256 for the U.S. fleet.

The FAA has included all known costs in its cost estimate. According to the manufacturer, however, some of the costs of this proposed AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected operators.

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) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Would 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-2025-0006; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00803-

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(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus Helicopters Model AS350B, AS350BA, AS350B1, AS350B2, AS350B3, AS350D, AS355E, AS355F, AS355F1, AS355F2, AS355N, and AS355NP helicopters, certificated in any category, as identified in European Union Aviation Safety Agency AD 2023-0131, dated July 3, 2023 (EASA AD 2023-0131).

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC): Code 5200, Doors.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report of a sliding door that was locked in the open position detaching from the helicopter during flight. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the insufficient upper rail roller locking mechanism of the sliding door. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could lead to the sliding door detaching from the helicopter during flight, and subsequent damage to the helicopter and injury to persons on the ground.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Requirements

Except as specified in paragraphs (h) and (i) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2023-0131.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2023-0131

(1) Where EASA AD 2023-0131 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where EASA AD 2023-0131 requires compliance in terms of flight hours, this AD requires using hours time-in-service.

(3) Where the service information referenced in EASA AD 2023-0131 specifies to discard parts, this AD requires removing those parts from service.

(4) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2023-0131.

(i) No Reporting Requirement

Although the material referenced in EASA AD 2023-0131 specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not require that action.

(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: AMOC@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local Flight Standards District Office/certificate holding district office.

(k) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Adam Hein, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (316) 946-4116; email: Adam.Hein@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

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

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

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2023-0131, dated July 3, 2023.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA material identified in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; phone: +49 221 8999 000; email: ADs@easa.europa.eu; website: easa.europa.eu. You may find the EASA material on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, 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 material at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, visit www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations or email fr.inspection@nara.gov.

Issued on January 8, 2025.

Steven W. Thompson,
Acting Deputy Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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