



## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

#### **14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2025-5040; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01516-R]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH 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 all Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK 117 D-3 helicopters. This proposed AD was prompted by a determination that certain bolts installed on the horizontal control rods of the flight controls were not dye penetrant inspected for cracks during manufacturing and thus could lead to bolt failure. This proposed AD would require replacement of affected bolts with bolts that are eligible for installation. This proposed AD would also prohibit installing an affected bolt on any helicopter. 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-2025-5040; 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 European Union Aviation Safety Agency (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](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); website: [easa.europa.eu](https://easa.europa.eu). You may find this material on the EASA website at [ad.easa.europa.eu](https://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. It is also available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2025-5040.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Aryanna Sanchez, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (817) 222-4058; email: [aryanna.t.sanchez@faa.gov](mailto:aryanna.t.sanchez@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 using a method listed under ADDRESSES. Include

“Docket No. FAA-2025-5040; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01516-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 Joe Salameh, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590. 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 2022-0228, dated November 28, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-

0228) (also referred to as the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition on Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK117 D-3 and D-3m helicopters. The MCAI states it has been determined that bolts on the horizontal control rods of the flight controls having part-number D671M7051211 and with a serial number listed in the applicable material were not subject to a dye penetrant inspection for cracks during manufacturing and thus are subject to bolt failure.

The FAA is proposing this AD to prevent bolt failure, which if not addressed, could result in loss of control of the helicopter.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2025-5040.

#### **Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51**

The FAA reviewed EASA AD 2022-0228, which specifies procedures for checking (inspecting) the serial number (S/N) of the bolt, and depending on the results of the inspection, replacing any affected bolts with serviceable bolts. EASA AD 2022-0228 also prohibits installing an affected bolt 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 civil aviation authority (CAA) 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, that authority has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

## **Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM**

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2022-0228, described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any exceptions identified in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. See “Differences Between this Proposed AD and the MCAI” for a discussion of the general differences included in this proposed AD.

## **Differences Between this Proposed AD and the MCAI**

The MCAI applies to Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model D-3m helicopters, whereas this proposed AD would not because that model does not have an FAA type certificate.

## **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 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 2022-0228 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2022-0228 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 2022-0228 does not mean that operators need to 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 2022-0228. Material required in EASA AD 2022-0228 for compliance will be available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2025-5040 after the FAA final rule is published.

## **Costs of Compliance**

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 146 helicopters of U.S. registry.

The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD.

### **Estimated costs**

| <b>Action</b> | <b>Labor Cost</b>                          | <b>Parts Cost</b> | <b>Cost per product</b> | <b>Cost on U.S. operators</b> |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Replace bolt  | 4 work-hours x<br>\$85 per hour =<br>\$340 | \$101             | \$441                   | \$64,386                      |

## **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 Deutschland GmbH:** Docket No. FAA-2025-5040; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01516-R.

**(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 Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK 117 D-3 helicopters, certificated in any category.

**(d) Subject**

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code 6700, Rotorcraft Flight Control.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by a determination that certain bolts installed on the horizontal control rods of the flight controls were not dye penetrant inspected for cracks during manufacturing and thus are subject to bolt failure. The FAA is issuing this AD to prevent bolt failure, which if not addressed, could result in 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 paragraphs (h) and (i) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0228, dated November 28, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0228).

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2022-0228**

(1) Where EASA AD 2022-0228 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where EASA AD 2022-0228 defines affected bolt as “Bolts, having part number D671M7051211 and a s/n [serial number] as listed in the ASB”, this AD requires replacing that text with “bolts, having part number D671M7051211 and a serial number as listed in Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin ASB MBB-BK117 D-3-67A-002, Revision 1, dated July 29, 2024”.

(3) Where EASA AD 2022-0228 refers to flight hours, this AD requires using hours time-in-service (TIS).



(4) Where the material referenced in EASA AD 2022-0228 specifies “check”, this AD requires replacing that text with “inspect”.

(5) Where the material referenced in EASA AD 2022-0228 specifies “discard”, this AD requires replacing that text with “remove from service”.

(6) Where the material referenced in EASA AD 2022-0228 specifies to make the bolt unserviceable, this AD does not require those actions.

(7) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2022-0228.

**(i) No Reporting Requirement**

Although the material referenced in EASA AD 2022-0228 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 and email to: [AMOC@faa.gov](mailto: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) Additional Information**

For more information about this AD, contact Aryanna Sanchez, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (817) 222-4058; email: [aryanna.t.sanchez@faa.gov](mailto:aryanna.t.sanchez@faa.gov).

## **(I) 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 2022-0228, dated November 28, 2022.

(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](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); website: [easa.europa.eu](http://easa.europa.eu). You may find this material on the EASA website at [ad.easa.europa.eu](http://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](http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations) or email [fr.inspection@nara.gov](mailto:fr.inspection@nara.gov).

Issued on December 2, 2025.

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