[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2026-2720; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00668-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 supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2019-09-03 and AD 2021-05-15, which apply to certain Airbus Helicopters Model AS332C, AS332C1, AS332L, and AS332L1 helicopters. AD 2019-09-03 requires a one-time inspection of the jettisoning mechanism of the cabin doors. AD 2021-05-15 requires repetitive inspections, modifying the release system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door or modifying the design of the jettison system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door. Since the FAA issued AD 2021-05-15, the manufacturer developed a prerequisite modification for certain helicopters, determined improved modification instructions were necessary for installation of the release system of the cabin lateral sliding plug door, and determined the compliance time could be extended. This proposed AD would require modifying the release system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door or modifying the design of the jettison system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door as a terminating action for the repetitive inspections. 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. 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 under Docket No. FAA-2026-2720; 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; 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 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Aryanna Sanchez, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone: (817)

222-5257; email: 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-2026-2720; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00668-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 the 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 Aryanna Sanchez, 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

The FAA issued AD 2019-09-03, Amendment 39-19637 (84 FR 22693, May 20, 2019) (AD 2019-09-03), for certain Airbus Helicopters Model AS332C, AS332C1, AS332L, and AS332L1 helicopters. AD 2019-09-03 was prompted by an MCAI originated by EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union. EASA issued AD 2017-0022, dated February 8, 2017 (EASA AD 2017-0022), which required an initial inspection and repetitive inspections after certain maintenance tasks of the jettisoning mechanism of the left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) door, followed by corrective actions if needed. EASA AD 2017-0022 also provided a terminating action for repetitive inspections by incorporating MOD [modification] 0725366. During a scheduled test of the jettisoning mechanism of the cabin lateral sliding plug door, a failure was reported. Subsequent investigation of the affected mechanism revealed that the cable of the jettison handle interfered with the cable clamp. AD 2019-09-03 required a one-time inspection of the jettisoning mechanism of the doors.

The FAA issued AD 2021-05-15, Amendment 39-21458 (86 FR 17290, April 2, 2021) (AD 2021-05-15), for certain Airbus Helicopters Model AS332C, AS332C1, AS332L, and AS332L1 helicopters. AD 2021-05-15 was prompted by an MCAI originated by EASA. EASA issued AD 2019-0064R1, dated December 19, 2019 (EASA AD 2019-0064R1) to supersede EASA AD 2017-0022. EASA AD 2019-0064R1 required an initial inspection and repetitive inspections after certain maintenance task, describes procedures for modifying the release system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door, or modifying the design of the jettison system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door to prevent the jettison handle cable from interfering with the cable clamps. EASA AD 2019-0064R1 provided a terminating action for repetitive inspections by

incorporating MOD 0725366 or MOD 0725367.

AD 2021-05-15 requires modifying the release system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door or modifying the design of the jettison system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door. The FAA issued 2021-05-15 to correct an unsafe condition identified as jamming of the door jettisoning mechanism, which prevents the jettisoning of the affected door in an emergency situation with possible obstruction of occupant evacuation.

Actions Since AD 2021-05-15 was Issued

Since the FAA issued AD 2021-05-15, EASA superseded EASA AD 2019-0064R1 and issued EASA AD 2021-0139, dated June 11, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0139). EASA AD 2021-0139 was issued to provide updated instructions for the installation of the various modifications. EASA then superseded EASA AD 2021-0139 and issued EASA AD 2021-0139R1, dated May 10, 2023 (EASA AD 2021-0139R1) (also referred to as the MCAI).

The MCAI states the manufacturer received additional reports regarding the difficulty of installing the MOD 0725366 on certain helicopters, and the manufacturer developed MOD 0729230 as a prerequisite to installing MOD 0725366 for certain helicopter configurations. In addition, the manufacturer determined that the compliance time to incorporate the modifications could be extended from within 1,100 flight hours or 27 months to within 1,325 flight hours or 40 months.

The FAA is issuing this AD to prevent the jettison handle cable from interfering with the cable clamps, which could lead to jamming of the door jettisoning mechanism, and prevent the jettisoning of the affected door in an emergency situation with possible obstruction of occupant evacuation.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2026-2720.

Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed EASA AD 2021-0139R1, which specifies procedures for inspecting the jettisoning mechanism of the LH and RH side of the cabin lateral sliding plug doors, and, ensuring the cables are not contacting the cable clamps and accomplishing the applicable corrective actions. EASA AD 2021-0139R1 also specifies procedures for modifying the release system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door or modifying the design of the jettison system of each cabin lateral sliding plug door. EASA AD 2021-0139R1 specifies that the modification is a terminating action for the repetitive inspections and gives credit for the modification if it was accomplished using certain previously issued service material as applicable to EASA AD 2021-0139R1.

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 the same modifications as AD 2021-05-15 and would also require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2023-0139R1, described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD.

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 incorporates EASA AD 2023-0139R1 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2023-0139R1 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 2023-0139R1 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 2023-0139R1. Material required by EASA AD 2023-0139R1 for compliance will be available at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2026-2720 after the FAA final rule is published.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 12 helicopters of U.S. registry.

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

Estimated costs

Action	Labor Cost	Parts Cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspecting cable clamps	1 work hour x $85 per hour = $85	$0	$85	$1,020
Modify the release	214 work-hours x $85 per hour = $18,190	Up to $122,500	Up to $140,690	Up to $1,688,280

Action	Labor Cost	Parts Cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Modify the jettison system	214 work-hours x $85 per hour = $18,190	Up to $122,500	Up to $140,690	Up to $1,688,280

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 that the 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:

a. Removing Airworthiness Directive 2019-09-03, Amendment 39-19637 (84 FR 22693, May 20, 2019); and Airworthiness Directive 2021-05-15, Amendment 39-21458 (86 FR 17290, April 2, 2021); and

b. Adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Airbus Helicopters: Docket No. FAA-2026-2720; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00668-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

(1) This AD replaces AD 2019-09-03, Amendment 39-19637 (84 FR 22693, May 20, 2019) (AD 2019-09-03).

(2) This AD replaces AD 2021-05-15, Amendment 39-21458 (86 FR 17290, April 2, 2021) (AD 2021-05-15).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus Helicopters Model AS332C, AS332C1, AS332L, and AS332L1 helicopters, certificated in any category, as identified in European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2021-0139R1, dated May 10, 2023 (EASA AD 2021-0139R1).

(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report that the cabin lateral sliding plug door failed its emergency jettisoning test; subsequent investigation revealed that the jettison handle cable interfered with the cable clamps. The FAA is issuing this AD to address this condition, which could lead to jamming of the door jettisoning mechanism, preventing the jettisoning of the affected door in an emergency situation, and possibly obstructing occupant evacuation.

(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 2021-0139R1.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2021-0139R1

(1) Where EASA AD 2021-0139R1 refers to June 25, 2021 (the effective date of EASA AD 2021-0139, dated June 11, 2021), this AD requires using the effective date of May 7, 2021 (the effective date of AD 2021-05-15).

(2) Where EASA AD 2021-0139R1 requires compliance in terms of flight hours (FH), this AD requires using hours time-in-service (TIS).

(3) Where paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2021-0139R1 specifies “During the next

jettisoning test of the cabin lateral sliding plug door, or within 110 FH, whichever occurs first after 22 February 2017 [the effective date of EASA AD 2017-0022], and, thereafter, during accomplishment of each maintenance task listed in paragraph 1.E.2 of the inspection ASB, inspect the affected parts in accordance with the instructions of section 3 of the inspection ASB", this AD requires replacing that text with "During the next jettisoning test of the cabin lateral sliding plug door, or within 110 hours TIS, whichever occurs first after June 24, 2019 [the effective date of AD 2019-09-03], and, thereafter, during the accomplishment of each maintenance task (adjustments as per Maintenance Manual (MET) Work Card 52-11-01-601, cable change, removal of the cable clamp, etc.) identified in paragraph 1.E.2 Compliance in Service of Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin ASB 332-52.00.56 Revision 1, dated April 11, 2019, is accomplished inspect the affected parts as defined in EASA AD 2021-0139R1 in accordance with the instructions of section 3 of the inspection ASB referenced in EASA 2021-0139R1".

(4) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0139R1 specifies "in accordance with the instructions of section 3 of the modification ASB" this AD requires replacing that text with "in accordance with section 3.B.2 through 3.B.3. of the modification ASB".

(5) If the modification specified in paragraph (4) of EASA AD 2021-0139R1 is done, it must be done at the compliance time specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0139R1.

(6) Although the material referenced in EASA AD 2021-0139R1 specifies to discard or scrap certain parts, this AD does not include that requirement.

(7) Where the material referenced in EASA AD 2021-0139R1 specifies to contact Airbus Helicopters, or a qualified Airbus Helicopters Group Technician, or by a customer technician previously qualified by Airbus Helicopters to perform certain actions, this AD requires performing those actions using a method approved by the Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus Helicopters' EASA Design Organization

Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(8) Where the material referenced in EASA AD 2021-0139R1 specifies "check", this AD requires replacing that text with "inspection".

(9) This AD does not adopt the "Remarks" section of EASA AD 2021-0139R1.

(i) 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 (j) of this AD and email 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.

(j) 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) 222-5257; email: aryanna.t.sanchez@faa.gov.

(k) 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 2021-0139R1, dated May 10, 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 March 18, 2026.

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

[FR Doc. 2026-05574 Filed: 3/20/2026 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/23/2026]