



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2026-3476; Project Identifier MCAI-2025-01366-R]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Bell Textron Canada Limited Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2025-09-03, which applies to certain Bell Textron Canada Limited (Bell) Model 430 helicopters. AD 2025-09-03 reduced the life limits on the main rotor (M/R) clevises, universal bearings, universal to pitch link bolts, the tube assembly, and the rod end assembly and requires replacing the M/R pitch link assemblies with re-identified part numbered assemblies. Since the FAA issued AD 2025-09-03, the FAA received comments proposing changes to the actions of AD 2025-09-03. This proposed AD proposes changes to actions in AD 2025-09-03 and addresses the comments received. 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-2026-3476; 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 Transport Canada material identified in this AD, contact Transport Canada, Transport Canada National Aircraft Certification, 159 Cleopatra Drive, Nepean, Ontario, K1A 0N5, CANADA; phone: (888) 663-3639; email: TC.AirworthinessDirectives-Consignesdenavigabilite.TC@tc.gc.ca. You may find the Transport Canada material on the Transport Canada website at tc.canada.ca/en/aviation.

- 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alexis Whitaker, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY; phone: (516) 228-7309; email: alexis.j.whitaker@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-2026-3476; Project Identifier MCAI-2025-01366-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 Alexis Whitaker, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY. 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 2025-09-03, Amendment 39-23024 (90 FR 17547, April 28, 2025), (AD 2025-09-03), for Bell Model 430 helicopters, serial numbers 49001 through 49129 inclusive. AD 2025-09-03 was prompted by an MCAI originated by Transport

Canada, which is the aviation authority for Canada. Transport Canada issued AD CF-2024-40, dated December 3, 2024, (Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40) to correct an unsafe condition identified as wear and damage of the M/R clevis neck or threaded area, which could lead to crack initiation at the M/R clevis neck and failure of the M/R pitch link, resulting in loss of control of the helicopter.

AD 2025-09-03 was prompted by an in-flight failure of the main rotor pitch link clevis due to fatigue damage caused by excessive wear of the universal bearing. AD 2025-09-03 requires a visual inspection of the M/R clevis, rod end, and a certain part-numbered universal bearing; performing a purge grease; performing a magnetic particle inspection of each M/R clevis; and depending on the inspection results, removing or replacing certain parts, and performing additional actions. AD 2025-09-03 also requires recurring inspections of each M/R clevis and each universal bearing. Additionally, AD 2025-09-03 requires reducing the life limits of affected parts and re-identifying the M/R pitch link assemblies with new part numbered assemblies.

The FAA issued AD 2025-09-03 to detect and address wear and damage of the M/R pitch link assembly components. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in crack initiation at the M/R clevis neck and failure of the M/R pitch link, which could result in loss of control of the helicopter.

Actions Since AD 2025-09-03 was Issued

Since the issuance of AD 2025-09-03, the FAA received comments from Bell and Superior Aviation Services requesting changes to the required actions of AD 2025-09-03, specifically in regard to some of the exceptions in the regulatory text of AD 2025-09-03. The comment disposition below specifically explains and addresses these comments. The FAA revised some of the actions required in this proposed rule in response to comments received on AD 2025-09-03. These revisions are explained below in the comment disposition. You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under

Comments on AD 2025-09-03

The FAA gave the public the opportunity to comment on AD 2025-09-03. The following presents the comments received on AD 2025-09-03 and the FAA's response to each comment.

Request to Remove the Magnetic Particle Inspection (MPI) Requirement

Bell and Superior Aviation Services requested that the FAA remove the requirement to perform an MPI after performing each detailed visual inspection in paragraph (h)(4) of AD 2025-09-03. The commenters stated the addition of an MPI at every 50 hours [time-in-service] is an unnecessary and burdensome requirement for operators due to not all operators having readily available access to perform an MPI. Additionally, the commenters stated all clevises were required to be inspected using an MPI in accordance with FAA AD 2021-24-09 and any suspected clevises would have been removed at the accomplishment of that FAA AD. The commenters also stated that Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 states an MPI should only be performed if any suspected defects are found as a result of the detailed inspection (DI). One commenter stated difficulty in locating the procedure to perform the MPI as well as finding individuals that are certified in performing the MPI. This commenter suggested instead of the MPI, the FAA should require a more thorough check (inspection) of the universal bearing by focusing on excessive wear and rotational forces. Additionally, one commenter stated the Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 already requires a recurring 50-hour or 60-day DI, and the FAA AD adding an additional MPI requirement after each DI inspection is not necessary due to the 60-day period imposing little stress on the pitch link clevis and the additional inspections are excessive.

The FAA agrees that performing an MPI of the universal bearings after each DI is not a requirement of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40. Accordingly, the FAA has

determined that performing an MPI of the universal bearings after every DI is not necessary and has revised the regulatory text of this proposed AD by removing this recurring inspection. The FAA also agrees that the requirement to perform an MPI of the M/R clevis after every DI is unnecessary to address the unsafe condition. However, the FAA has determined that there may be limited circumstances in which an MPI of the clevis must be performed. The FAA revised paragraph (h)(4) of the regulatory text of this proposed AD to require an MPI only if any linear indications are found on the M/R clevis as a result of the DI. The FAA acknowledges that only certified individuals can perform an MPI.

Request to Remove the Re-identification Requirement

Bell requested that the FAA revise paragraph (h)(6) of the Required Actions paragraph of AD 2025-09-03 that states “Where Part I paragraph A.9. of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specifies to re-identify the main rotor pitch link assemblies and sub-components, for this AD those actions are not required if already accomplished when doing Part I paragraphs A.2. through A.4. of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40.” Reidentification is only conducted in paragraph A.9 of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40. Paragraphs A.2 through A.4 specify replacing parts with serviceable parts.

The FAA disagrees that paragraph (h)(6) of AD 2025-09-03 should be revised. Part I paragraphs A.2 through A.4 of the Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specify accomplishing the required actions in accordance with Part I of Bell Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) 430-22-61, Basic Issue, dated November 6, 2023 (ASB 430-22-61). Paragraphs 4.d and 8 of Part I of ASB-430-22-61 require part number re-identification of the universal bearing, pitch link assemblies, and their sub-components, and the FAA has determined that this should be required in the FAA AD. No changes were made to this proposed AD as a result of this comment.

Request to Remove the Replacement Requirement for Certain Parts

Bell requested that the FAA remove paragraph (h)(7) of AD 2025-09-03. Bell stated that paragraph (h)(7) is not correct since Table 4-1 of the Bell 430 ALS [Airworthiness Limitations Section] does not have a life limit assigned to the -109 or -111 part numbers, instead it is based on condition.

The FAA disagrees with removing paragraph (h)(7) of AD 2025-09-03 because the FAA determined this exception is necessary to clarify that the requirement in Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 Part I paragraph B. does not apply to M/R pitch link assemblies part numbers 430-010-411-109, -109FM, -111, and -111FM, as those parts are replaced on-condition and do not have a life limit. No changes were made to this proposed AD as a result of this comment.

Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40, which was approved for incorporation by reference as of May 13, 2025 (90 FR 17547, April 28, 2025). Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specifies procedures for verifying rotorcraft historical records to determine the total accumulated hours air time of certain parts, replacing the M/R pitch link assembly components that have exceeded their life limit, re-identifying the M/R pitch link assemblies, and performing a detailed inspection of the pitch link tube assembly, rod end assembly, and universal pitch link bolt.

Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 also specifies procedures for performing repetitive detailed inspections of the M/R clevises and universal bearings (including hardware) and depending on the inspection results, replacing any part that does not meet inspection criteria or further corrective actions. Additionally, Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specifies procedures for performing a purge grease, performing a magnetic particle inspection and either replacing any M/R clevis with cracks or replacing any missing cadmium plating. Furthermore, Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specifies

reporting any cracks or M/R clevises with damage beyond published limits to Bell Product Support Engineering.

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 continue to require all actions of AD 2025-09-03, except for any changes described above to the actions specified in Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 and any differences identified as exceptions 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 requires replacing M/R pitch link assembly P/Ns 430-010-411-109, -109FM, -111, and -111FM before they exceed their life limit. This AD does not contain that requirement because those assemblies do not have a life limit and are replaced on-condition as required by the Airworthiness Limitations Section.

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 Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Material required by Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 for compliance will be available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2026-3476 after the FAA final rule is published.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 29 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
Review records to determine total time on each part	.25 work-hour x \$85 per hour = \$22	\$0	\$22	\$638
Inspect the pitch link tube assembly, rod end assembly, and universal to pitch link bolt	4 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$340	\$0	\$340	\$9,860
Inspect the M/R pitch link clevis	2 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$170	\$0	\$170 per inspection cycle	\$4,930 per inspection cycle
Inspect the universal bearing and hardware	2 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$170	\$0	\$170 per inspection cycle	\$4,930 per inspection cycle
Re-identify components	1 work-hour x \$85 per hour = \$85	\$0	\$85	\$2,465
Perform a magnetic particle inspection	4 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$340	\$0	\$340 per inspection cycle	\$9,860 per inspection cycle

The FAA estimates the following costs to do any repairs/replacements that would

be required based on the results of the inspection. The agency has no way of determining the number of helicopters that might need these repairs or replacements:

On-condition costs

Action	Labor Cost	Parts Cost	Cost per product
Replace an M/R clevis	4 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$340	\$432	\$772 per part
Replace a universal bearing	4 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$340	\$3,566	\$3,906 per part
Replace a universal to pitch link bolt	4 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$340	\$374	\$714 per part
Replace missing cadmium plating	4 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$340	\$0	\$340
Replace a pitch link tube assembly or rod end assembly	4 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$340	\$6,463	\$6,803 per part

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 2025-09-03, Amendment 39-23024 (90 FR 17547, April 28, 2025); and

b. Adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Bell Textron Canada Limited: Docket No. FAA-2026-3476; Project Identifier MCAI-2025-01366-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

This AD replaces AD 2025-09-03, Amendment 39-23024 (90 FR 17547, April 28, 2025).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Bell Textron Canada Limited (Bell) Model 430 helicopters, serial numbers 49001 through 49129 inclusive, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code 6220, Main Rotor Head.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by an in-flight failure of the main rotor (M/R) pitch link clevis (clevis) due to fatigue damage caused by excessive wear of the universal bearing. The FAA is issuing this AD to detect and address wear and damage of the M/R pitch link assembly components. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in crack initiation at the M/R clevis neck and failure of the M/R pitch link, which 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, Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40, dated December 3, 2024 (Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40).

(h) Exceptions to Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40

(1) Where Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using May 13, 2025, the effective date of AD 2025-09-03.

(2) Where Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 requires compliance in terms of hours air time, this AD requires using hours time-in-service.

(3) Where Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 uses the term “new” in the definition of “serviceable part,” this AD requires replacing that text with “new (zero hours time-in-service)”.

(4) Where any paragraph in Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specifies performing a magnetic particle inspection (MPI) “if any suspected defects are found” after performing a detailed inspection, this AD requires replacing that text with “if any suspected defects (evidenced by linear indications) are found on the M/R clevis as a result of the detailed inspection”.

Note to paragraph (h)(4): a linear indication is defined as an indication for which the longest dimension is at least three times longer than the smallest one.

(5) Where Part I paragraph A.8. and Part III paragraph B. of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specify to purge grease the bearings, for this AD those actions are not required if already accomplished when doing Part I paragraph A.7 and Part III paragraph A. of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40.

(6) Where Part I paragraph A.9. of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specifies to re-identify the main rotor pitch link assemblies and sub-components, for this AD those actions are not required if already accomplished when doing Part I paragraphs A.2. through A.4. of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40.

(7) Where Part I paragraph B. of Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 specifies to replace each component listed in Table 1 of the Bell ASB before exceeding the applicable airworthiness life limit indicated in Table 4-1 of the applicable ALS [Airworthiness Limitations Section], for this AD that requirement does not apply to M/R pitch link assemblies part numbers 430-010-411-109, -109FM, -111, and -111FM, as those parts are replaced on-condition.

(i) No Reporting Requirement

Although the material referenced in Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40 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.

(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 Alexis Whitaker, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY; phone: (516) 228-7309; email: alexis.j.whitaker@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) 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.

(3) The following material was approved for IBR on May 13, 2025 (90 FR 17547, April 28, 2025).

(i) Transport Canada AD CF-2024-40, dated December 3, 2024.

(ii) [Reserved]

(4) For Transport Canada material identified in this AD, contact Transport Canada National Aircraft Certification, 159 Cleopatra Drive, Nepean, Ontario K1A 0N5, Canada;

phone: 888-663-3639; email: TC.AirworthinessDirectives-

Consignesdenavigabilite.TC@tc.gc.ca. You may find this material on the Transport Canada website at tc.canada.ca/en/aviation.

(5) 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.

(6) 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 April 2, 2026.

Paul R. Bernado,
Acting Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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