

provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

**Compliance:** Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent undetected cracking of the frames and skin panels of the fuselage, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 15,343 total flight cycles, or within 200 landings after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform an external detailed visual inspection to detect cracks in the left- and right-hand skin exterior of the fuselage at floor level, in accordance with paragraph III, External Inspection, of the Accomplishment Instructions of de Havilland Service Bulletin S.B. 8-53-48, dated August 26, 1994.

(1) If no crack is detected, repeat the external detailed visual inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 750 landings.

(2) If any crack is detected, prior to further flight, perform an internal visual inspection to detect cracks of the fuselage frames in accordance with the service bulletin. Accomplishment of this internal visual inspection constitutes terminating action for the repetitive external detailed visual inspections required by of paragraph (a)(1) of this AD.

(i) If no crack is detected during the internal inspection, prior to further flight, repair the cracked area(s) found during the external inspection, in accordance with the de Havilland DHC-8 Structural Repair Manual; or in accordance with a method approved by Transport Canada; or in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, New York Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Engine and Propeller Directorate. Repeat the internal inspection thereafter at intervals specified in accordance with the Dash 8 Maintenance Program Manual.

(ii) If any crack is detected during the internal inspection, prior to further flight, repair all cracks found during both the external and internal inspections, in accordance with the de Havilland DHC-8 Structural Repair Manual, or in accordance with a method approved by Transport Canada Aviation; or in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, New York ACO, FAA, Engine and Propeller Directorate. Repeat the internal inspection thereafter at intervals specified in accordance with the Dash 8 Maintenance Program Manual.

(b) Prior to the accumulation of 31,000 flight cycles, or within 12 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform an internal visual inspection to detect cracking of the fuselage frames, in accordance with de Havilland Service

Bulletin S.B. 8-53-48, dated August 26, 1994. Accomplishment of the internal visual inspection constitutes terminating action for the repetitive external detailed visual inspections required by paragraph (a)(1) of this AD.

(1) If no cracking is detected during the internal inspection, repeat the internal inspection thereafter at intervals specified in accordance with the Dash 8 Maintenance Program Manual.

(2) If any cracking is detected during the internal inspection, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with the de Havilland DHC-8 Structural Repair Manual, or in accordance with a method approved by Transport Canada Aviation; or in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, New York ACO, FAA, Engine and Propeller Directorate. Repeat the internal inspection thereafter at intervals specified in accordance with the Dash 8 Maintenance Program Manual.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, New ACO, FAA, Engine and Propeller Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, New York ACO.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the New York ACO.

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 23, 1996.

Darrell M. Pederson,  
*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
[FR Doc. 96-22143 Filed 8-29-96; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-SW-14-AD]

#### Airworthiness Directives; Robinson Helicopter Company Model R22 Helicopters

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

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

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes the superseding of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to Robinson Helicopter Company (Robinson) Model R22 helicopters, that currently requires installation of an improved throttle governor; an adjustment to the low RPM warning unit threshold to increase the revolutions-per minute (RPM) at which

the warning horn and caution light activate; and revisions to the R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manual that prohibit flight with the improved throttle governor selected off, except in certain situations. This action would require the same compliance actions required by the existing AD, as well as require an insertion of procedures for the improved throttle governor into the Normal and Emergency sections of the R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manual and correct the applicability section of the existing AD. This proposal is prompted by the need to insert normal and emergency procedures for the improved throttle governor in the flight manual, as well as clarify the helicopter serial numbers to which the AD applies. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to minimize the possibility of pilot mismanagement of the main rotor (M/R) RPM, which could result in unrecoverable M/R blade stall and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by October 29, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-SW-14-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Elizabeth Bumann, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Blvd., Lakewood, California 90712 4137, telephone (310) 627-5265; fax (310) 627-5210.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before

and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 96-SW 14-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

#### Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-SW-14-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

#### Discussion

On May 15, 1996, the FAA issued AD 96-11-08, Amendment 39-9633 (61 FR 26429, May 28, 1996), to require installation of an improved throttle governor; an adjustment to the low RPM warning unit threshold to increase the RPM at which the warning horn and caution light activate; and, revisions to the R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manual that prohibit flight with the improved throttle governor selected off, except in certain situations. That action was prompted by an FAA Technical Panel review of Model R22 accident history data which revealed that M/R blade stall at abnormally low M/R RPM resulted in accidents. The requirements of that AD are intended to minimize the possibility of pilot mismanagement of the M/R RPM, which could result in unrecoverable M/R blade stall and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

Since the issuance of that AD, the FAA has determined that the affected serial-numbered helicopters in the applicability section of that AD should be changed from "serial number (S/N) 0002 to 2537," to include all Model R22 helicopters. The FAA has also determined that R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manuals issued prior to July 6, 1995 did not address normal and emergency procedures for the improved throttle governor. Finally, since the issuance of the existing AD, the FAA has determined that the cost estimate for installation of the improved throttle governor kits did not include the replacement cost of the magnetos.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Model R22 helicopters

of the same type design, the proposed AD would supersede AD 96-11-08 to require installation of the improved throttle governor; an adjustment to the low RPM warning unit threshold; insertions of language into the R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manual in the Normal and Emergency sections to address procedures for the improved throttle governor, as well as an insertion in the Limitations section that prohibits flight with the improved throttle governor selected off, except in certain situations; and, would expand the applicability section to additional Model R22 helicopters and revise the estimated cost impact of the existing AD.

The FAA estimates that 1,014 helicopters of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 8 work hours to install the improved throttle governor, or 7 hours to upgrade the throttle/collective governor, 4 hours to upgrade the magnetos, if required, and approximately 0.2 work hour to accomplish the adjustment of the light/warning horn RPM, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts will cost approximately \$2,150 per helicopter to install the improved throttle governor, or approximately \$500 for upgrading the throttle/collective governor per helicopter. Installation of upgraded magnetos, if required, will cost approximately \$927 per helicopter. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$3,029,088. This cost estimate assumes that no helicopters are currently equipped with a governor and all will need the improved throttle governor installed. Additionally, the cost estimate assumes that 300 Model R22 helicopters will require installation of the upgraded magnetos.

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

#### List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

#### The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by removing Amendment 39-9633 (61 FR 26430, May 28, 1996) and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), to read as follows:

Robinson Helicopter Company: Docket No. 96-SW-14-AD. Supersedes AD 96-11-08, Amendment 39-9633.

*Applicability:* Model R22 helicopters, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopters that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must use the authority provided in paragraph (e) to request approval from the FAA. This approval may address either no action, if the current configuration eliminates the unsafe condition, or different actions necessary to address the unsafe condition described in this AD. Such a request should include an assessment of the effect of the changed configuration on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD. In no case does the presence of any modification, alteration, or repair remove any helicopter from the applicability of this AD.

*Compliance:* Required within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, unless accomplished previously.

To minimize the possibility of pilot mismanagement of the main rotor (M/R) revolutions-per-minute (RPM), which could result in unrecoverable M/R blade stall and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Adjust the A569-1 or -5 low-RPM warning unit so that the warning horn and caution light activate when the M/R RPM is

between 96% and 97% rotor RPM in accordance with the procedures contained in the Model R22 maintenance manual.

(b) For Model R22 helicopters that do not have a governor currently installed, install a Robinson Helicopter Company KI-67-2 Governor Field Installation Kit in accordance with the kit instructions. Upon completion of the governor installation required by this paragraph, revise the FAA-approved Robinson Helicopter Company R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manual (RFM) in accordance with paragraph (d) of this AD.

(c) For Model R22 helicopters that have a throttle/collective governor currently installed, upgrade the governor with a Robinson Helicopter Company KI-67-3 Governor Upgrade Kit in accordance with the kit instructions. Upon completion of the upgrade required by this paragraph, revise the FAA-approved Robinson Helicopter Company R22 Rotorcraft Flight Manual (RFM) in accordance with paragraphs (d) of this AD.

(d) Revise the FAA-approved Robinson Helicopter Company R22 RFM as follows:

(1) Insert the FAA-approved Robinson Helicopter Company R22 RFM revision, dated July 6, 1995, or later FAA-approved revision addressing the governor normal and emergency procedures, into the Normal and Emergency sections of the RFM.

(2) Include the following statement in the Limitations section: "Flight prohibited with governor selected off, with exceptions for inflight system malfunction or emergency procedures training." This may be accomplished by inserting a copy of this AD or the FAA-approved Robinson Helicopter Company R22 RFM revision dated July 23, 1996, into the RFM.

(e) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office.

(f) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the helicopter to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on August 19, 1996.

Daniel P. Salvano,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 96-22136 Filed 8-29-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

## 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-SW-15-AD]

### Airworthiness Directives; Robinson Helicopter Company Model R44 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes the superseding of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to Robinson Helicopter Company (Robinson) Model R44 helicopters, that currently requires an adjustment to the low RPM warning unit threshold to increase the revolutions per-minute (RPM) at which the warning horn and caution light activate, and revisions to the R44 Rotorcraft Flight Manual that prohibit flight with the throttle governor (governor) selected off, except in certain situations. This action would require the same compliance actions required by the existing AD, and would correct the applicability section of the existing AD. This proposal is prompted by the need to expand the helicopter serial number applicability to include all Robinson Model R44 helicopters. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to minimize the possibility of pilot mismanagement of the main rotor (M/R) RPM, which could result in unrecoverable M/R stall and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by October 29, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-SW-15-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Elizabeth Bumann, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Blvd., Lakewood, California 90712 4137, telephone (310) 627-5265; fax (310) 627-5210.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to

the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 96-SW-15-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

#### Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-SW-15-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

#### Discussion

On May 15, 1996, the FAA issued AD 96-11-09, Amendment 39-9634 (61 FR 26427, May 28, 1996), to require an adjustment to the low RPM warning unit threshold to increase the RPM at which the warning horn and caution light activate, and revisions to the R44 Rotorcraft Flight Manual that prohibit flight with the governor selected off, except in certain situations. That action was prompted by an FAA Technical Panel Review of Robinson accident history data which revealed that M/R blade stall at abnormally low M/R RPM resulted in accidents. The requirements of that AD are intended to minimize the possibility of pilot mismanagement of the M/R RPM, which could result in unrecoverable M/R stall and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

Since the issuance of that AD, the FAA has determined that the affected serial-numbered helicopters in the applicability section of that AD should be changed from "serial number (S/N) 0001 to 01183 and 0189," to include all Robinson Model R44 helicopters.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Robinson Model R44