

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 request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (b) 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 detect a crack in the engine coupling tube which could result in coupling failure, loss of engine drive, and a subsequent forced landing, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 10 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 10 hours TIS, inspect engine coupling tube, P/N C631A1002101, for any crack and replace any cracked engine coupling tube before further flight. Inspect and replace, if necessary, in accordance with paragraph CC of Eurocopter Service Telex No. 05-001 EC 120, Version B, dated August 26, 1999, except that reporting to Eurocopter Technical Support is not required.

(b) 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, Rotorcraft Regulations Group, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Rotorcraft Regulations Group.

**Note 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Rotorcraft Regulations Group.

(c) Special flight permits will not be issued.

(d) The inspection and repair, if necessary, shall be done in accordance with paragraph CC of Eurocopter Service Telex No. 05-001 EC 120, Version B, dated August 26, 1999. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from American Eurocopter Corporation, 2701 Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, Texas 75053-4005, telephone (972) 641-3460, fax (972) 641-3527. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(e) This amendment becomes effective on October 19, 1999 to all persons except those persons to whom it was made immediately effective by Emergency Priority Letter AD 99-19-23, issued September 2, 1999, which contained the requirements of this amendment.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on September 22, 1999.

**Henry A. Armstrong,**

*Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 99-25374 Filed 10-1-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99-SW-15-AD; Amendment 39-11344; AD 99-21-01]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model SA-360C, SA-365C, C1, and C2 Helicopters**

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

**ACTION:** Final rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) applicable to Eurocopter France Model SA-360C, SA-365C, C1, and C2 helicopters. This action requires replacing certain electrical modules with airworthy electrical modules. This amendment is prompted by the discovery of several defective electrical modules. This condition if not corrected could result in loss of electrical continuity, which could cause loss of critical rotorcraft electrical systems and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**DATES:** Effective October 19, 1999.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before December 3, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99-SW-15-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas. 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:** Robert McCallister, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0110, telephone (817) 222-5121, fax (817) 222-5961.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (DGAC), the airworthiness authority for France, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Eurocopter France Model SA-360C,

SA-365C, C1, and C2 helicopters. The DGAC advises of the malfunctions due to faulty "CONNECTRAL" modules on electrical circuits of a Super Puma AS332 helicopter.

Eurocopter France has issued Eurocopter Service Bulletin No. 01.37, dated May 28, 1998 (SB), for Model SA-360C, SA-365C, C1, and C2 helicopters. The SB specifies inspecting and replacing "CONNECTRAL" green electrical modules having a manufacturing code of 95/16 through 96/21. The manufacturing code identifies the year and week of module production. The electrical modules identified by a white dot on the face are airworthy and do not need to be replaced. The DGAC classified this SB as mandatory and issued AD 98-252-043(A), dated July 1, 1998, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in France.

These helicopter models are manufactured in France and are type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of § 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Eurocopter France Model SA-360C, SA-365C, C1, and C2 helicopters of the same type design registered in the United States, this AD is being issued to prevent loss of electrical continuity, which could cause loss of critical systems and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter. This AD requires replacing each "CONNECTRAL" green electrical module having a manufacturing code of 95/16 through 96/21 with an airworthy electrical module. Replacing the electrical modules identified with a white dot on the face is not required because the manufacturer has verified the proper functioning of these units.

None of the Model SA-360C, SA-365C, C1, and C2 helicopters affected by this action are on the U.S. Register. All helicopters included in the applicability of this rule are operated by non-U.S. operators under foreign registry; therefore, they are not directly affected by this AD action. However, the FAA considers that this rule is necessary to ensure that the unsafe condition is addressed in the event that any of these

subject helicopters are imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future.

Should an affected helicopter be imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, it would require approximately 120 work hours per helicopter to accomplish the proposed actions at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$7,282 for the maximum number of modules replaced per helicopter, but the helicopter manufacturer has stated that the parts will be provided at no cost. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of this AD would be \$7,200 per helicopter.

Since this AD action does not affect any helicopter that is currently on U.S. Register, it has no adverse economic impact and imposes no additional burden on any person. Therefore, notice and public procedures hereon are unnecessary and the amendment may be made effective in less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**.

#### Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and, thus, was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this 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 under the caption **ADDRESSES**. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the AD action and determining whether additional rulemaking action would be needed.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the rule that might suggest a need to modify the 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 that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this AD will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this rule must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to

Docket No. 99-SW-15-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

The regulations adopted 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 final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

The FAA has determined that notice and public comment are unnecessary in promulgating this regulation; therefore, it can be issued immediately to correct an unsafe condition in aircraft since none of these model helicopters are registered in the United States. The FAA has also determined that this regulation is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866. It has been determined further that this action involves an emergency regulation under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979). If it is determined that this emergency regulation otherwise would be significant under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures, a final regulatory evaluation will be prepared and placed in the Rules Docket. A copy of it, if filed, may be obtained from 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.

#### Adoption of the 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 adding a new airworthiness directive to read as follows:

##### AD 99-21-01 Eurocopter France:

Amendment 39-11344, Docket No. 99-SW-15-AD.

**Applicability:** Model SA-360C, SA-365 C, C1, and C2 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 otherwise 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 request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (b) 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 within 400 hours time-in-service or within 6 calendar months, whichever occurs first, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent loss of electrical continuity, which could cause loss of critical rotorcraft electrical systems and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Remove and replace each "CONNECTRAL" green electrical module that does not have a white dot on the face and that has a manufacturing code of 95/16 through 96/21 with an airworthy electrical module.

**Note 2:** Eurocopter France Service Bulletin No. 01.37, dated May 28, 1998, pertains to the subject of this AD.

(b) 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, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Standards Staff.

**Note 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Rotorcraft Standards Staff.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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.

**Note 4:** The subject of this AD is addressed in Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile AD 98-252-043(A), dated July 1, 1998.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on September 24, 1999.

**Henry A. Armstrong,**

*Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 99-25598 Filed 10-1-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**