provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopter 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 50 hours time-in-service, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent failure of an oil cooler fan splined drive shaft (shaft), loss of oil cooling, and a subsequent engine shutdown during flight, accomplish the following:

(a) Replace each shaft, part number (P/N) L 792M3004 225, with an airworthy shaft, P/N L 792M3004 235.

(b) Re-identify the P/N on each oil cooler fan (fan) using a rubber stamp or smudge-proof paint or equivalent as follows:

(1) On the left fan, change the P/N from L 792M3004 102 to L 792M3004 103.

(2) On the right fan, change the P/N from L 792M3005 102 to L 792M3005 103.

(c) Change the P/N on the gearbox component history card or equivalent record to reflect the revised part numbers.

Note 2: Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. EC 135–79A–001, dated January 23, 1998, pertains to the subject of this AD.

(d) Replacing the shaft, re-identifying the fans, and recording this on the gearbox component history card or equivalent record constitute terminating actions for the requirements of this AD.

(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, Regulations Group, 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, Regulations Group.

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Regulations Group.

(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.

Note 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Luftfahrt-Bundesamt (Federal Republic of Germany) AD No. 1998–109, dated February 26, 1998.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on February 7, 2000.

Henry A. Armstrong,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 00–3224 Filed 2–10–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99–SW–39–AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS–350B, BA, B1, B2, and D, and Model AS–355E, F, F1, F2, and N Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the supersedure of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to Eurocopter France Model AS–350B, BA, B1, B2, and D, and Model AS–355E, F, F1, F2, and N helicopters, that currently requires inspecting the main gearbox suspension bi-directional cross-beam (cross-beam) for cracks, and replacing the cross-beam if a crack is found. This action would require the same inspections as the existing AD but would add the time intervals for performing repetitive dye-penetrant inspections on cross-beams with 5,000 or more hours time-in-service (TIS). This proposal is prompted by the discovery that time intervals for performing the required dye-penetrant inspections are not included in the existing AD. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the cross-beam that could cause the main gearbox to pivot resulting in severe vibrations and a subsequent forced landing.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 11, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99–SW–39–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.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from American Eurocopter Corporation, 2701 Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, Texas 75053–4005, telephone (972) 641–3460, fax (972) 641–3527. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Grigg, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, ASW–111, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137, telephone (817) 222–5490, fax (817) 222–5961.

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. 99–SW–39–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 Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99–SW–39–AD, 2601

Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Discussion

On June 19, 1998, the FAA issued AD 98–14–01, Amendment 39–10635 (63 FR 35128, June 29, 1998), to require visual and dye-penetrant inspections of the cross-beam for cracks and replacement with an airworthy cross-beam if a crack is found. That action was prompted by several reports of cracks in the cross-beam. The requirements of that AD are intended to provide a terminating action to prevent failure of the cross-beam that could cause the main gearbox to pivot resulting in severe vibrations and a subsequent forced landing.

Since the issuance of that AD, the FAA has discovered that the time intervals for performing the required repetitive dye-penetrant inspections on cross-beams with 5,000 or more hours TIS were not included. The initial dye-penetrant inspection for cracks must be performed when the cross-beams attain 5,000 hours TIS or 2,750 cycles, whichever occurs first. Thereafter, repetitive dye-penetrant inspections for cracks must be performed at intervals not to exceed 550 hours TIS or 2,750 operating cycles, whichever occurs first.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Eurocopter France Model AS–350B, BA, B1, B2, and D, and Model AS–355E, F, F1, F2, and N helicopters of the same type design, the proposed AD would supersede AD 98–14–01 to require, at specified time intervals or cycles, repetitive visual and dye-penetrant inspections of the cross-beam for cracks, and replacing, if necessary, the cross-beam with an airworthy cross-beam.

The FAA estimates that 454 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD; that it would take approximately 0.5 work hour per helicopter to accomplish each visual inspection, with an estimated average of 150 visual inspections per helicopter, 3 work hours per helicopter to accomplish a dye-penetrant inspection, with an estimated average of 3 dye-penetrant inspections per helicopter, and 6 work hours per helicopter to replace the cross-beam, if necessary; and that the average labor rate is $60 per work hour. Parts would cost approximately $6,000 per cross-beam. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $5,175,600 to perform 150 visual inspections and an average of 3 dye-penetrant inspections per helicopter and to replace the cross-beam on all 454 helicopters.

The regulations proposed herein 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. Therefore, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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 39–10635 (63 FR 35128, June 29, 1998) and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

Eurocopter France: Docket No. 99–SW–39–AD. Supersedes AD 98–14–01, Amendment 39–10635, Docket No. 97–SW–25–AD.

Applicability: Model AS–350B, BA, B1, B2, and D, and Model AS–355E, F, F1, F2, and N helicopters, with main gearbox suspension bi-directional cross-beam (cross-beam), part number (P/N) 350A38–1018–all dash numbers, installed, 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 (e) 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 failure of the cross-beam that could lead to rotation of the main gearbox resulting in severe vibrations and a subsequent forced landing, accomplish the following:

(a) For cross-beams having 2,000 or more hours time-in-service (TIS) or 10,000 or more operating cycles, whichever occurs first:

Note 2: The Master Service Recommendations and the flight log contain accepted procedures that are used to determine the cumulative operating cycles on the rotorcraft.

(1) Within 30 hours TIS, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 30 hours TIS or 150 operating cycles, whichever occurs first, visually inspect the cross-beam for cracks in accordance with paragraph 2.B.1 of Eurocopter France Service Bulletin No. 05.00.28, applicable to Model AS–350 helicopters, or Eurocopter France Service Bulletin No. 05.00.29, applicable to Model AS–355 helicopters, both dated May 26, 1997.

(2) If a crack is found remove the cross-beam and replace it with an airworthy cross-beam.

(b) For cross-beams having 5,000 or more hours TIS:

(1) In addition to continuing the repetitive inspections of paragraph (a)(1), before further flight, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 550 hours TIS or 2,750 operating cycles, whichever occurs first, perform a dye-penetrant inspection in accordance with paragraph 2.B.2) of Eurocopter France Service Bulletin No. 05.00.28, applicable to Model AS–350 helicopters, or Eurocopter Service Bulletin No. 05.00.29, applicable to Model AS–355 helicopters, both dated May 26, 1996.

(2) If a crack is found remove the cross-beam and replace it with an airworthy cross-beam.

(c) Prior to installing any replacement cross-beams, regardless of TIS or operating cycles, inspect the replacement cross-beam in accordance with paragraph (b)(1) of this AD.

(d) Modifying the helicopter in accordance with paragraph 2.B of the Accomplishment Instructions in Eurocopter Service Bulletin No. 63.00.07, applicable to Model AS–350B, BA, B1, B2, and D helicopters, or Eurocopter Service Bulletin No. 63.00.13, applicable to Model AS–355E, F, F1, F2, and N helicopters, both dated April 7, 1997, constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

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

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Regulations Group.

(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.

Note 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (France) AD 96–156–071(B)R1 and AD 96–155–053(B)R1, both dated June 4, 1997.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on February 4, 2000.

Eric Bries,

Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 00–3225 Filed 2–10–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

20 CFR Parts 404 and 416

RIN 0960–AE99

Technical Revisions to Medical Criteria for Determinations of Disability

AGENCY: Social Security Administration (SSA).

ACTION: Proposed rules.

SUMMARY: We are proposing to make a number of technical revisions to the Listing of Impairments (the listings). We use the listings to adjudicate claims for disability under titles II and XVI of the Social Security Act (the Act) when we evaluate claims of individuals at steps 3 of our sequential evaluation processes for adults and children. The proposed changes reflect advances in medical knowledge, treatment, and terminology, clarify certain listing criteria, remove listings that we rarely use or that are redundant, and add new listings consistent with current medical practice.

These proposed revisions are technical changes that are intended to clarify or modify current language to improve understanding and usability. They are not intended to be a comprehensive update of the listings.

DATES: To be sure that your comments are considered, we must receive them no later than April 11, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be submitted in writing to the Commissioner of Social Security, P.O. Box 17703, Baltimore, MD 21235–7703, sent by telefax to (410) 966–2830, sent by e-mail to ''regulations@ssa.gov'', or delivered to the Office of Process and Innovation Management, Social Security Administration, L2109 West Low Rise Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235–6401, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on regular business days. Comments may be inspected during these hours by making arrangements with the contact person shown below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carolyn Kiefer, Social Insurance Specialist, Office of Disability, Social Security Administration, 3–B–9 Operations Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21235–6401, (410) 965–9104 or TTY (410) 966–5609.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Title II of the Act provides for the payment of disability insurance benefits to workers insured under the Act. Title II also provides, under certain circumstances, for the payment of child's insurance benefits for persons who become disabled before age 22 and widow's and widower's insurance benefits based on disability for widows, widowers, and surviving divorced spouses of insured individuals. In addition, title XVI of the Act provides for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments to persons who are aged, blind, or disabled and who have limited income and resources.

For adults under both the title II and title XVI programs and for persons claiming child's insurance benefits based on disability under the title II program, ''disability'' means that an impairment(s) results in an inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity. For an individual under age 18 claiming SSI benefits based on disability, ''disability'' means that an impairment(s) results in ''marked and severe functional limitations.'' Under both title II and title XVI, disability must be the result of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment(s) that can be expected to result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months.

The process for determining whether an individual (except for an individual under age 18 claiming SSI benefits based on disability) is disabled based on the statutory definition is set forth in our longstanding regulations at §§ 404.1520 and 416.920. These regulations provide for a sequential evaluation process for evaluating disability. There is a separate sequential evaluation process described in regulations at § 416.924 for individuals under age 18 claiming SSI benefits based on disability. At step 3 of both sequential evaluation processes we ask the same question: Whether an individual who is not engaging in substantial gainful activity and who has an impairment(s) that is severe, has an impairment(s) that meets or equals in severity the criteria of an impairment listed in appendix 1 of subpart P of part 404, the listings. The listings describe, for each of the major body systems, impairments that are considered severe enough to prevent a person from doing any gainful activity (or in the case of a child under age 18 claiming SSI benefits based on disability, to cause marked and severe functional limitations). Although the listings are contained only in part 404, they are referenced by subpart I of part 416.

The listings are divided into Part A and Part B. The criteria in Part A are applied in evaluating impairments of persons age 18 or over. The criteria in Part A may also be used to evaluate impairments in persons under age 18 if the disease processes have a similar effect on adults and children. In evaluating disability for a person under age 18, we first use the criteria in Part B and, if the criteria in Part B do not apply, we use the criteria in Part A (see §§ 404.1525 and 416.925).

These changes are not intended to be a comprehensive update and revision of the listings. We continue to review each of the body system listings to determine appropriate revisions and updates of a more substantive nature. If we determine that more substantive revisions are necessary, we will publish a notice in the **Federal Register** describing those proposed revisions and requesting public comments. Therefore, we are now requesting comments only on the specific technical changes we are