

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2021-0505; Project Identifier 2018-SW-004-AD; Amendment 39-21721; AD 2021-19-03]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Leonardo S.p.a. Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Leonardo S.p.a. Model AB139 and AW139 helicopters. This AD was prompted by reports of spurious in-flight disconnections of the automatic flight control system (AFCS). This AD requires updating certain “Primus Epic” system software, as specified in a European Aviation Safety Agency (now European Union Aviation Safety Agency) (EASA) AD, which is incorporated by reference. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective November 1, 2021.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of November 1, 2021.

ADDRESSES: For material incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Room 6N 321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110. It is also available in the AD docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0505.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0505; 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 final rule, the EASA AD, any

comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Hal Jensen, Aerospace Engineer, Operational Safety Branch, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, FAA, 950 L'Enfant Plaza N SW, Washington, DC 20024; telephone 202-267-9167; email hal.jensen@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2018-0002, dated January 4, 2018 (EASA AD 2018-0002) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Leonardo S.p.a. Model AB139 and AW139 helicopters.

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Leonardo S.p.a. Model AB139 and AW139 helicopters. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on July 7, 2021 (86 FR 35690). The NPRM was prompted by reports of spurious in-flight disconnections of the AFCS. The NPRM proposed to require updating certain “Primus Epic” system software, as specified in EASA AD 2018-0002.

The FAA is issuing this AD to address spurious degradation or unavailability of the full AFCS. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in temporary impairment of the automated flight aid for control of the helicopter and increase the flightcrew's workload. See EASA AD 2018-0002 for additional background information.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this final rule. The FAA received no comments on the NPRM or on the determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

The FAA reviewed the relevant data and determined that air safety requires adopting this AD as proposed. Except for minor editorial changes, this AD is adopted as proposed in the NPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator. Accordingly, the FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2018-0002 requires installation of certain “Primus Epic” system software, depending on the helicopter configuration. EASA AD 2018-0002 allows installation of “Primus Epic” system software on a helicopter after that helicopter has had the software upgrade installed.

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.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 128 helicopters of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs for Required Actions

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Software upgrade	24 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$2,040	\$0	\$2,040	\$261,120

The FAA has included all known costs in its cost estimate. According to the manufacturer, however, some or all of the costs of this AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected operators.

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

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will 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 this AD:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) 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.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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 adding the following new airworthiness directive:



AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE

www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/alerts/
www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/advanced.html

2021-19-03 Leonardo S.p.a.: Amendment 39-21721; Docket No. FAA-2021-0505; Project Identifier 2018-SW-004-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective November 1, 2021.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Leonardo S.p.a. Model AB139 and AW139 helicopters, certificated in any category, identified in paragraphs (c)(1) and (2) of this AD, equipped with “Primus Epic” system software release 7.4 (Phase 7 V1), 7.7 (Phase 7 V3) or 7.10 (Phase 7 V4).

(1) Model AB139 and AW19 helicopters having serial number (S/N) 31005, 31006, and S/Ns 31008 through 31157 inclusive; and S/Ns 41001 through 41023 inclusive.

(2) Model AW139 helicopters having S/N 31201 and subsequent, and S/N 41201 and subsequent.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 2200, Auto Flight System.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of spurious in-flight disconnections of the automatic flight control system (AFCS). The FAA is issuing this AD to address spurious degradation or unavailability of the full AFCS. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in temporary impairment of the automated flight aid for control of the helicopter and increase the flightcrew's workload.

(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, European Aviation Safety Agency (now European Union Aviation Safety Agency) (EASA) AD 2018-0002, dated January 4, 2018 (EASA AD 2018-0002).

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2018-0002

(1) Where EASA AD 2018-0002 refers to flight hours (FH), this AD requires using hours time-in-service.

(2) Where EASA AD 2018-0002 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(3) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2018-0002 does not apply to this AD.

(4) Where the service information referenced in EASA AD 2018-0002 specifies to download an option file from a certain website, that method of installation is not required by this AD.

(i) No Reporting Requirement

Although the service information referenced in EASA AD 2018-0002 specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not include that requirement.

(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. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-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) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Hal Jensen, Aerospace Engineer, Operational Safety Branch, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, FAA, 950 L'Enfant Plaza N SW, Washington, DC 20024; telephone 202-267-9167; email hal.jensen@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2018-0002, dated January 4, 2018.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA AD 2018-0002, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 817-222-5110. This material may be found in the AD docket on the internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0505.

(5) You may view this material that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, email fr.inspection@nara.gov, or go to <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued on August 30, 2021.

Lance T. Gant,

Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

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