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 April 9, 1999.

John J. Hickey,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service. [FR Doc. 99–9511 Filed 4–15–99; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99-SW-02-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron-manufactured Model HH–1K, TH–1F, TH–1L, UH–1A, UH–1B, UH–1E, UH–1F, UH–1H, UH–1L, and UH–1P Helicopters; and Southwest Florida Aviation SW204, SW204HP, SW205, and SW205A–1 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 Bell Helicopter Textron (Bell)-manufactured Model HH-1K, TH-1F, TH-1L, UH-1A, UH-1B, UH-1E, UH-1F, UH-1H, UH-1L, and UH-1P helicopters; and Southwest Florida Aviation SW204, SW204HP, SW205, and SW205A-1 helicopters that currently requires modification and inspections of the tailboom vertical fin spar (vertical fin spar). This action would require the same modification and inspections plus two additional inspections, and replacement of the vertical fin spar. This proposal is prompted by 2 accidents involving fatigue cracks in the vertical fin spar that have occurred since the issuance of AD 97-20-09. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent in-flight failure of the vertical fin spar and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before June 15, 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–02–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: Charles Harrison, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137, telephone (817) 222–5447, fax (817) 222–5960. 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–02–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, (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99–SW–02–AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

Discussion

On September 17, 1997, the FAA issued priority letter AD 97–20–09, applicable to Bell-manufactured Model HH–1K, TH–1F, TH–1L, UH–1A, UH–1B, UH–1E, UH–1F, UH–1H, UH–1L, and UH–1P helicopters; and Southwest Florida Aviation SW204, SW204HP and SW205 helicopters, which requires modification and inspections of the vertical fin spar. That priority letter AD was prompted by two accidents

involving in-flight failures of the vertical fin spars on Model TH-IL and UH-1B helicopters. One other accident occurred on a Model 205A-1 helicopter which is of similar type design. One of the accidents resulted in a fatality. As a result of those accident investigations, the FAA determined that a large number of high-power events that result from repeated heavy lift operations can cause fatigue cracks which will cause the vertical fin spar to fail. After the issuance of that AD, the FAA determined that additional model helicopters are affected by the same unsafe condition. The FAA then issued AD 97-20-09, Amendment 39-10521, on May 4, 1998 (63 FR 26439, May 13, 1998), and added Model SW205A-1 helicopters and the Utah State University UH-1H helicopters to the applicability of that AD.

Since the issuance of that AD, two accidents, one of which included fatalities, have occurred. The FAA has determined that additional inspections are needed, and replacement of the vertical fin spar, part number (P/N) 205–030–846-all dash numbers, is required. This proposal would require another inspection and another modification at 50 hours TIS, and further inspections thereafter at intevals not to exceed 50 hours TIS. This proposal would also require that the vertical fin be replaced within 12 calendar months.

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Model HH–1K, TH–1F, TH–1L, UH–1A, UH–1B, UH–1E, UH–1F, UH–1H, UH–1L, and UH–1P helicopters; and Southwest Florida Aviation SW204, SW204HP, SW205, and SW205A–1 helicopters of the same type design, the proposed AD would supersede AD 97–20–09 to require inspections, modification, and replacement of the vertical fin spar.

The FAA estimates that 75 helicopters of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 4 work hours to accomplish the initial inspection, 8 work hours to accomplish the modification and the recurring inspections, and 180 hours to replace the vertical fin spar, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$200 for the modification and \$15,000 for the replacement. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$2,004,000 to conduct an initial inspection, modify the vertical fin spars and conduct recurring inspections, and replace the vertical fin spars on all helicopters in the U.S. fleet.

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 39–10521 (63 FR 26439, May 13, 1998), and by adding a

new airworthiness directive (AD), to read as follows:

California Department of Forestry; Firefly Aviation Helicopter Services (Previously Erickson Air Crane Co.); Garlick Helicopters, Inc.; Hawkins and Powers Aviation, Inc.; International Helicopters, Inc.; Tamarack Helicopters (Previously Ranger Helicopter Services, Inc.); Robinson Aircrane; Williams Helicopter **Corporation (Previously Scott Paper** Co.); Smith Helicopters; Southern Helicopter Inc.; Southwest Florida Aviation; Utah State University; Western International Aviation, Inc.; UNC Helicopters; And U.S. Helicopter, Inc.: Docket No. 99-SW-02-AD. Supersedes AD 97-20-09, Amendment 39-10521, Docket No. 97-SW-35-AD.

Applicability: Model HH-1K (Type Certificate Data Sheet (TCDS) H5NM), TH-IF (TCDS H12NM, and R00008AT), TH-1L (TCDS H5NM, H7SO, and H4NM), UH-1A (TCDS H3SO), UH-1B (TCDS H1RM, H3NM, H13WE, H3SO, H5SO, and R00012AT), UH-1E (TCDS H5NM, H7SO, H8NM, and H4NM), UH-1F (TCDS H2NM, H7NE, H11SW, H12NM, and R00008AT), UH-1H (TCDS H13WE, H3SO, H15NM, and R00007DE), UH-lL (TCDS H5NM, H7SO, and H4NM), UH-1P (TCDS H12NM, and R00008AT), and SW204 (TCDS H6SO), SW204HP (TCDS H6SO), SW205 (TCDS H6SO), and SW205A-1 (TCDS H6SO) helicopters, with tailboom vertical fin spar (vertical fin spar), part number (P/N) 205-032-899-all dash numbers, 205-030-846-all dash numbers, or 205-032-851-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 (h) 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 tailboom vertical fin (fin) spar and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

- (a) Within 8 hours time-in-service (TIS), modify the vertical fin spar as follows:
- (1) Remove the 42° gearbox cover and open the drive shaft cover on the fin spar assembly (see Figure 1).
- (2) Remove the first four rivets from the fin spar located at the bottom of the fin spar left-hand side at the tailboom and fin spar junction, and the first four rivets aft of the junction along the lower edge of the fin spar side-skin as shown (see Figure 2).
- (3) Trim the fin spar left-hand skin using extreme care to not damage the fin spar assembly (see Figure 3).

- (4) Deburr the rivet holes and trimmed skin edges. Remove all debris. In a ventilated work area, remove any surface contaminants with a cloth that has been dampened with aliphatic naphtha or an equivalent cleaning solvent
- (5) Reattach the side-skin to the fin spar using MS 20470AD rivets. DO NOT install the bottom two rivets into the fin spar where the skin was trimmed.
- (6) Attach the fin spar side-skin lower edge using the rivets specified in Figure 3.
 - (7) Refinish all reworked areas.
- (b) After modifying the fin spar assembly, inspect the fin spar for cracks before further flight and thereafter, at intervals not to exceed 8 hours TIS as follows:
- (1) Remove the lower aft tailboom inspection door, located at tailboom station 180 (see Figure 1).
- (2) Remove the 42° gearbox cover and open the drive shaft cover on the fin (see Figure 1).
- (3) In a ventilated work area, clean all surfaces to be inspected with a cloth dampened with aliphatic naphtha or an equivalent cleaning solvent.
- (4) Through the lower aft tailboom inspection door, using a bright light and an inspection mirror, inspect the fin spar assembly adjacent to the tailboom top skin on the forward side, paying special attention to the left-hand edge and the adjacent surfaces (see Figures 1 and 2).
- (5) Using a bright light and a 10x or higher magnifying glass, inspect the fin spar assembly adjacent to the tailboom top-skin on the in-board and out-board sides, the vertical edge, and the two open rivet holes. Using a bright light and a mirror, inspect the aft side of the fin spar in the same area. Special attention must be given to the left-hand edge of the fin spar and any adjacent surfaces between fin stations 66.31 and 71.31 (see Figure 2).
- (6) If any crack is discovered on the fin spar, replace the fin spar assembly with an airworthy fin spar assembly before further flight.
- (c) Within 50 hours TIS, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 50 hours TIS, inspect the fin spar assembly as follows:
- (1) Remove the 42° gearbox cover and open the driveshaft cover on the fin spar assembly (see Figure 1). Remove the aft lower fin fairing and fin access panels that allow access to the aft side of the forward fin spar and the secondary spar (see Figure 1).
- (2) In a ventilated work area, clean all surfaces to be inspected with a cloth dampened with aliphatic naphtha or an equivalent cleaning solvent. Using a bright light, 10x or higher magnifying glass, and a borescope as required, inspect all of the fin ribs, fittings, skins, and secondary aft spar of the fin assembly (see Figures 4 and 5). Pay particular attention to the upper and lower fittings at tailboom station 227 for cracked or corroded fittings or sheared or loose rivets.
- (3) Gain access to the canted bulkhead aft of tailboom station 194.30 through the most aft lower access covers by removing the aft access covers or position light fairings as required. Visually inspect the canted bulkhead forward and aft sides through the lower tailboom inspection hole and position

light access holes for cracks, corrosion, or loose or sheared rivets in all skins, fittings and bulkheads using a bright light, an inspection mirror, and a borescope as required (see Figures 4 and 5). Pay particular attention to the area in the upper forward corners of the aft skin directly around the fin spar assembly and the overlap area of the top skin beneath the 42° gearbox for cracks, which are only visible from the underside.

- (4) Any crack found in the fin spar assembly requires replacement with an airworthy part. Replacing the entire fin spar configuration with an airworthy fin spar configuration that has been demonstrated to the FAA to satisfy the structural fatigue requirements of repeated heavy lift operations, and is approved by the Manager, FAA, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, will constitute a terminating action for the requirements of this AD. Any corrosion, loose or sheared rivets, or cracked skins or ribs found within the inspection areas must be repaired prior to further flight.
- (d) Within 50 hours TIS, modify the fin spar as follows:
- (1) Remove the 42° gearbox cover and open the driveshaft cover on the fin spar assembly (see Figure 1).
- (2) Remove the next 10 rivets from the fin spar located at the bottom of the fin spar left-hand side at the tailboom and fin spar junction (see Figures 6 and 7, whichever is applicable).

Caution: Extreme care must be taken when drilling and removing rivets from the side of the fin spar to ensure the fin spar assembly is not damaged.

- (3) Trim the fin left-hand side skin using extreme care to not damage the fin spar assembly to expose the spar outboard edge (See Figure 6 or 7, whichever is applicable).
- (4) Deburr the rivet holes and trimmed side skin edges. Remove all debris. In a ventilated work area, remove any surface contaminates with a cloth that has been dampened with aliphatic naphtha or an equivalent cleaning solvent.
- (5) Fabricate cover plates in accordance with the notes and drawings of Figure 8 or 9, whichever is applicable. Ream prepare the holes in the fin spar and parts and install HI–LOK fasteners.
- **Note 2:** Bell Helicopter Medium Structural Repair Manual, BHT–MED–SRM–1, pages 3–36 through 3–38, pertains to this installation and reaming procedure.
- (6) Refinish all reworked areas, close driveshaft and replace 42° gearbox cover.
- (e) After modification of the fin spar assembly, before further flight and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS, inspect the fin spar for cracks as follows:
- (1) Remove the 42° gearbox cover, open the driveshaft cover on the vertical fin spar assembly, and remove the spar cover plate and filler plate from the lower left-hand side of the fin assembly (see Figures 1 and 8 or 9, whichever is applicable).

Caution: Extreme care must be taken when removing the cover plate and filler from the side of the fin spar to ensure that the spar assembly is not damaged.

(2) In a ventilated work area, clean the surface to be inspected with a cloth dampened with aliphatic naphtha.

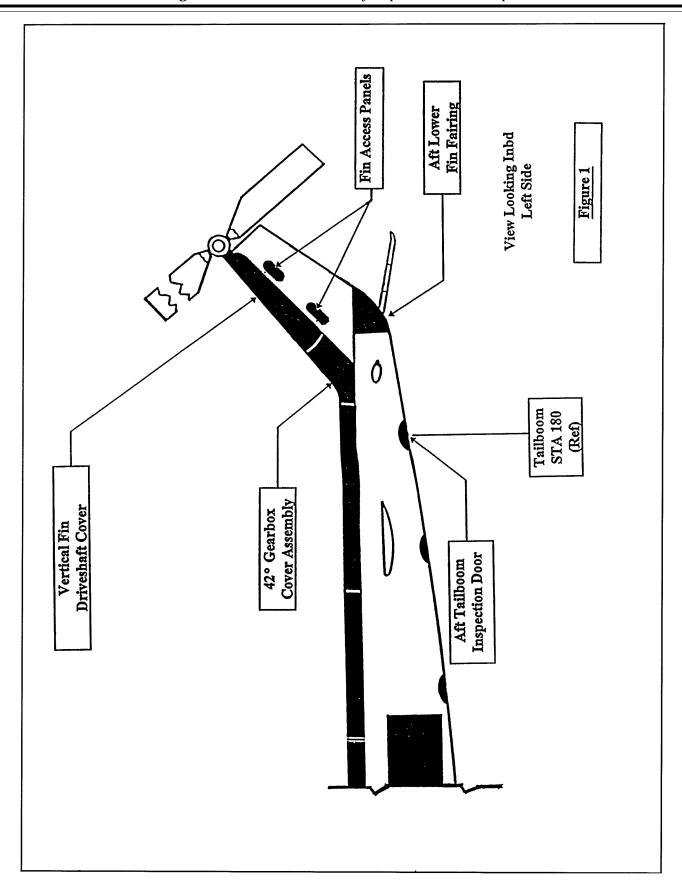
Caution: Do not use chemical paint strippers. Use Scotch-Brite Grade-A VFN and methyl-ethyl ketone (MEK) or a suitable solvent to remove the paint and primer in the inspection area.

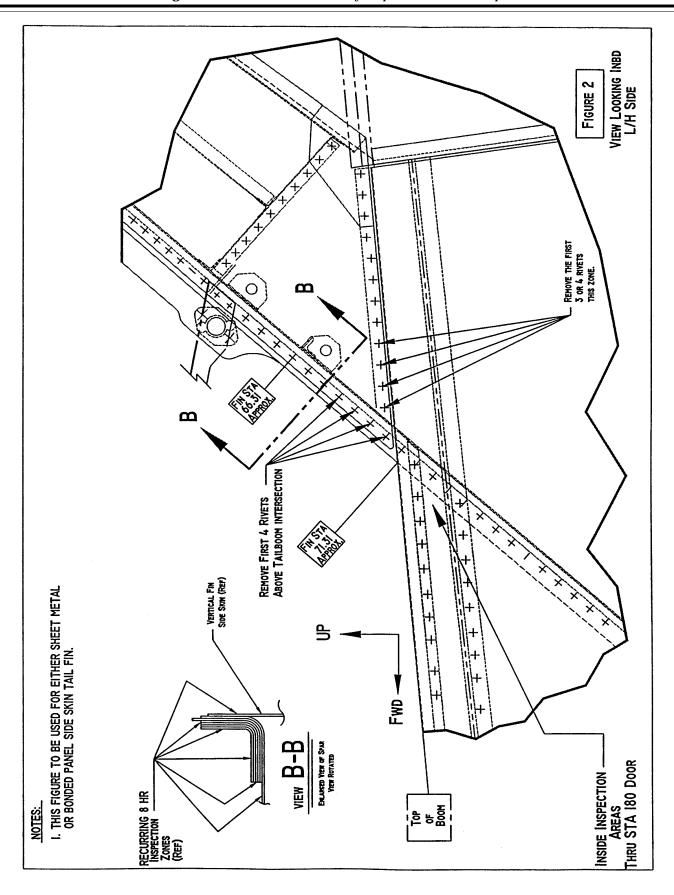
(3) Perform a dye-penetrant inspection of the exposed area of the fin spar (See Figures 6 and 7).

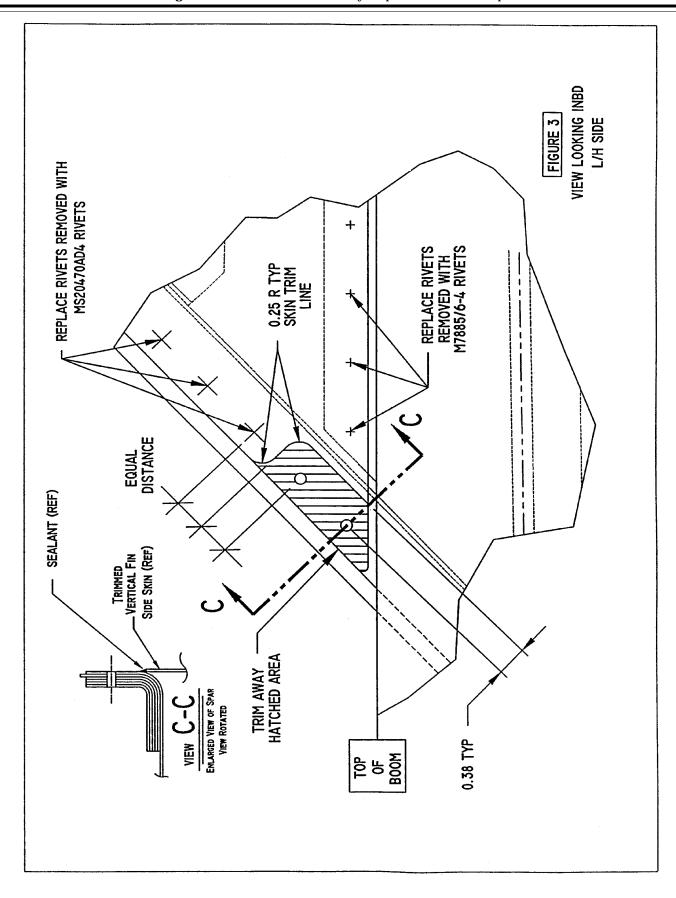
Note 3: ASTM E1416 or MIL–STD–6866, or the Bell Helicopter Standard Practices Manual, BHT–ALL–SPM, Chapter 6.2, pertains to this inspection.

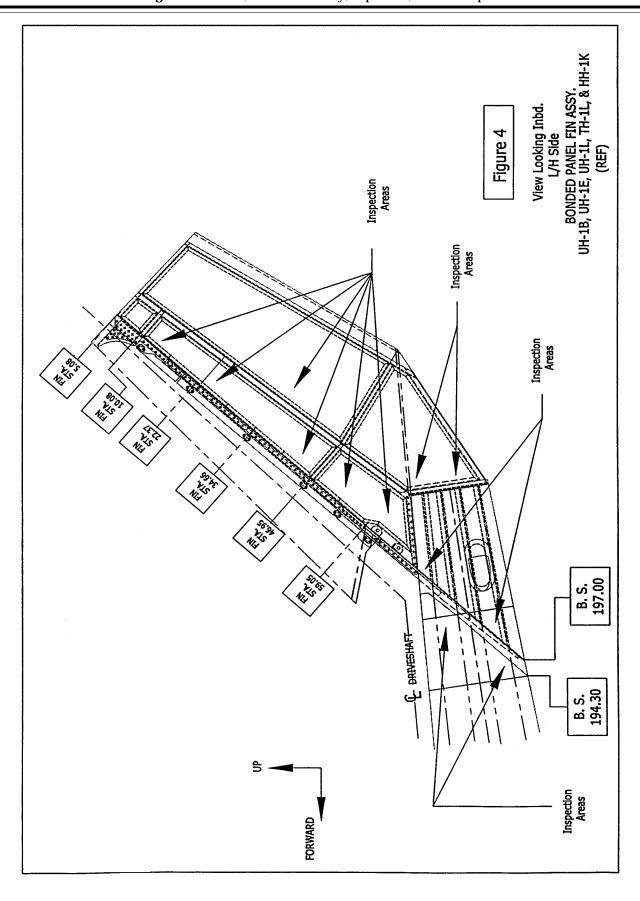
- (4) If any crack is discovered on the fin spar, replace the fin spar assembly with an airworthy fin spar assembly before further flight.
- (5) After inspection, apply zinc chromate primer to the bare surfaces. When dry, reinstall the cover plate and the filler using fasteners specified in Figure 8 or 9, whichever is applicable.
- (6) Install the 42° gearbox cover and the driveshaft cover.
- (f) Within 12 calendar months, remove the fin spar, P/N 205–030–846-all dash numbers, P/N 205–032–899-all dash numbers, or P/N 205–032–851-all dash numbers, whichever is applicable, and replace it with an airworthy fin spar configuration that has been demonstrated to the FAA to satisfy the structural fatigue requirements of repeated heavy lift operations, and is approved by the Manager, FAA, Rotorcraft Standards Staff.

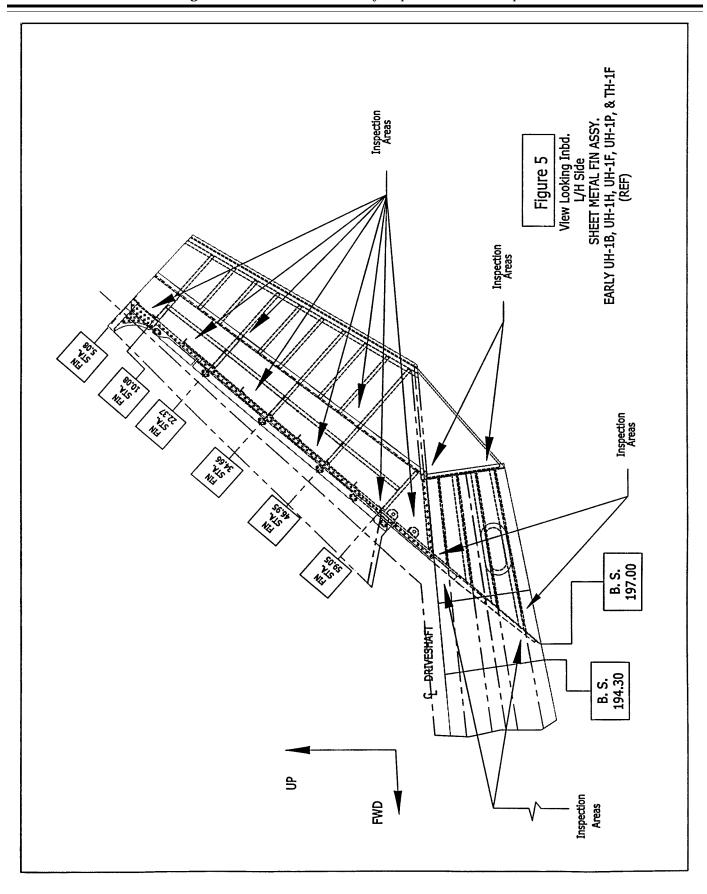
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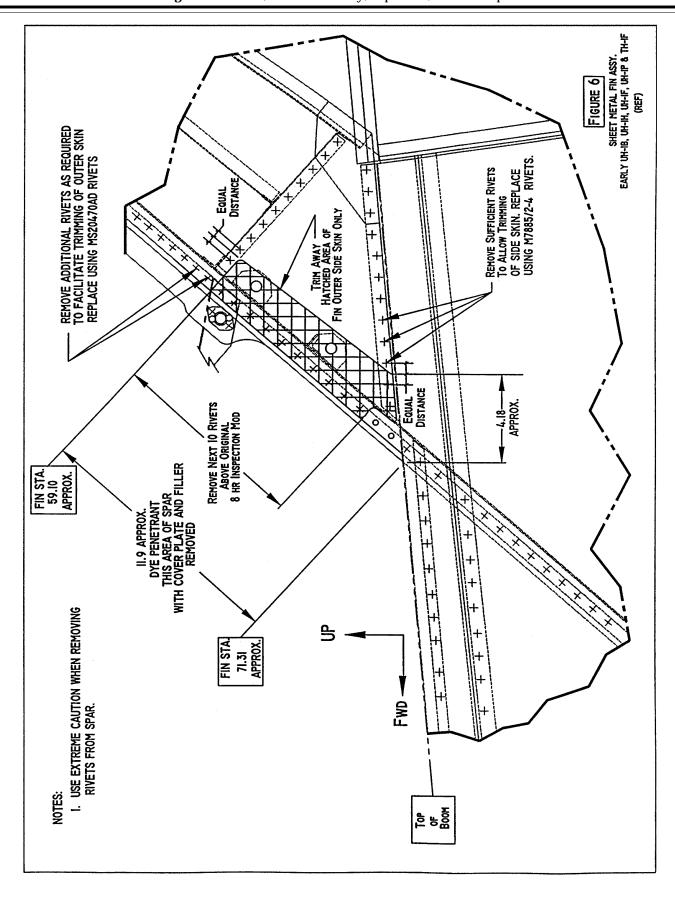


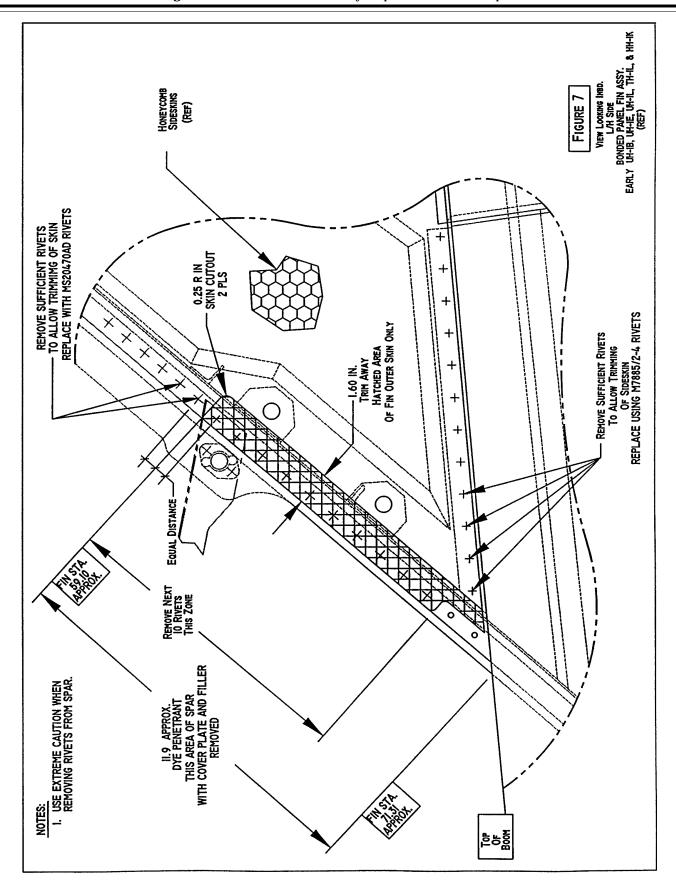


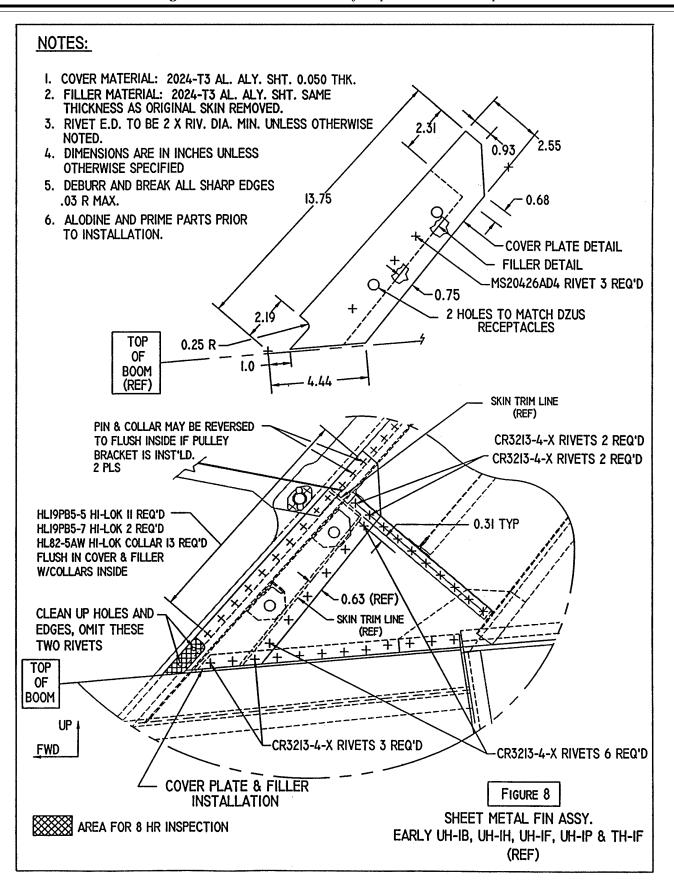


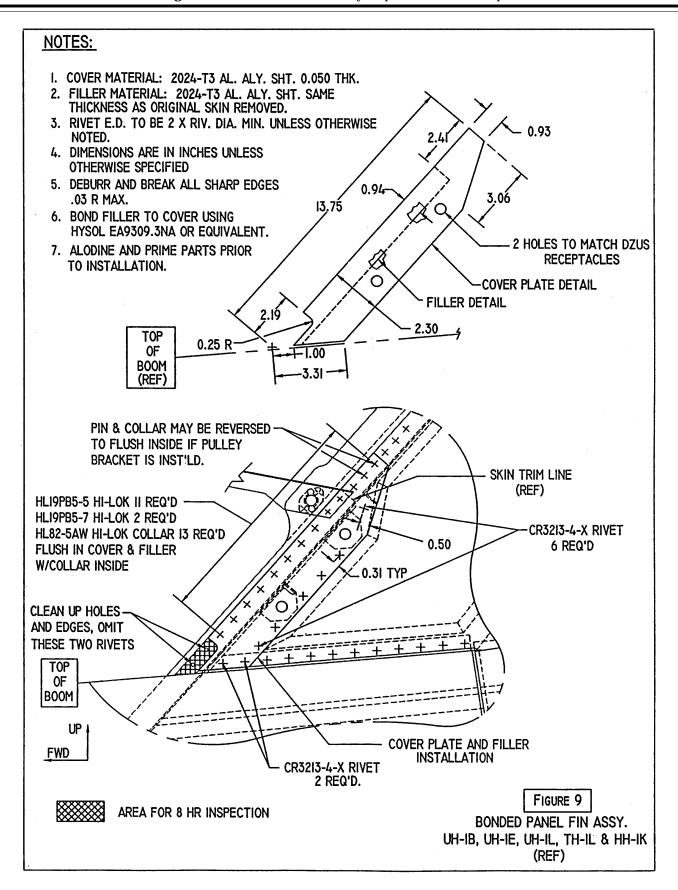












(g) Replacing the fin spar, P/N's 205–032–899-all dash numbers, 205–030–846-all dash numbers, or 205–032–851-all dash numbers, with an airworthy fin spar that has been demonstrated to the FAA to satisfy the structural fatigue requirements of repeated heavy lift operations and approved by the Manager, FAA, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, constitutes a terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

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

Note 4: Information concerning the existence of approved fin spar configurations and alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Rotorcraft Standards Staff.

(i) 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 April 9, 1999.

Eric Bries,

Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service. [FR Doc. 99–9510 Filed 4–15–99; 8:45 am]

IFR Doc. 99–9510 Filed 4–15–99; 8:45 am BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

30 CFR Part 935 [OH-246-FOR]

Ohio Regulatory Program

AGENCY: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule; public comment period and opportunity for public hearing.

SUMMARY: OSM is announcing receipt of a proposed amendment to the Ohio regulatory program (Ohio program) under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). Ohio is proposing revisions to section 1501:13–1–04 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) as it relates to exemptions for coal extraction incidental to government-financed highway or other construction. The amendment is intended to revise the Ohio program to include counterparts to the recently promulgated "AML Enhancement Rule," which revised the

Federal regulations at 30 CFR 707.5 and added a new provision, at 30 CFR 874.17.

DATES: If you submit written comments, they must be received by 4:00 p.m., [E.D.T.] May 17, 1999. If requested, a public hearing on the proposed amendment will be held on May 11, 1999. Requests to speak at the hearing must be received by 4:00 p.m., on May 3, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Mail or hand-deliver your written comments and requests to speak at the hearing to George Rieger, Manager, Oversight and Inspection Office, at the address listed below.

You may review copies of the Ohio program, the proposed amendment, a listing of any scheduled public hearings, and all written comments received in response to this document at the addresses listed below during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. You may receive one free copy of the proposed amendment by contacting OSM's Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center.

George Rieger, Manager, Oversight and Inspection Office, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, 3 Parkway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15220, Telephone: (412) 937–2153

Ohio Division of Mines and Reclamation, 1855 Fountain Square Court, Columbus, Ohio 43244, Telephone: (614) 265–1076.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Rieger, Manager, Oversight and Inspection Office, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center, Telephone: (412) 937–2153. Internet: grieger@osmre.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background on the Ohio Program

On August 16, 1982, the Secretary of the Interior conditionally approved the Ohio program. You can find background information on the Ohio program, including the Secretary's findings, the disposition of comments, and the conditions of approval in the August 10, 1982, **Federal Register** (47 FR 34688). You can find later actions on conditions of approval and program amendments at 30 CFR 935.11, 935.15, and 935.16.

II. Description of the Proposed Amendment

By letter dated March 16, 1999 (Administrative Record No. OH–2178–00) Ohio submitted a proposed amendment to its program concerning exemptions for coal extraction incidental to government-financed highway or other construction. Ohio

submitted the proposed amendment at its own initiative, in order to incorporate into its program the expanded exemption recently promulgated in the Federal regulations at 30 CFR 707.5, as part of the "AML Enhancement Rule." Under this rule, approved Title IV abandoned mine land (AML) projects under SMCRA which involve incidental coal extraction and are less than 50 percent government financed may qualify for exemption. Projects which qualify for this expanded exemption must also meet the newly promulgated requirements contained in 30 CFR 874.17. (64 FR 7470, February 12, 1999). The changes proposed by Ohio in the amendment are discussed briefly below:

In the existing Ohio regulations under OAC section 1501:13-1-04(B), the subject exemption is limited to coal extraction incidental to "government financed construction." "Government financed construction" is defined, in relevant part, as construction funded 50 percent or more by funds appropriated from a government financing agency's budget or obtained from general revenue bonds. In the amendment, the State proposes to include within the exemption coal extraction incidental to construction that is government-funded at less than 50 percent when the construction is undertaken as an approved reclamation project under Section 1513.30 (state financed projects) or 1513.37 (Federally funded AML projects) of the Revised Code. The proposed amendment also specifies requirements for approved reclamation projects with less than 50 percent government financing, such as procedures for determining whether a project qualifies for exemption, concurrence between the AML and regulatory program coordinators as to the limits and boundaries of incidental coal extraction, required documentation, and special requirements, including a requirement that projects be conducted in accordance with Ohio's approved AML program. Finally, the amendment requires a contractor to obtain a surface coal mining permit if it extracts coal beyond the limits which have been agreed upon by the AML and regulatory program coordinators.

III. Public Comment Procedures

According to the provisions of 30 CFR 732.17(h), we are seeking comments on whether the proposed amendment satisfies the applicable program approval criteria of 30 CFR 732.15. If we determine the amendment to be adequate, it will become part of the Ohio program.