

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF AIRCRAFT SERVICES
SAFETY ALERT

No. 00-04

August 1, 2000

Subject:

Airworthiness Directive 2000-15-52 Bell Helicopter Textron Inc. Alternate Method of Compliance Memorandum dated July 28, 2000.

Distribution:

All DOI and Forest Service Aviation Activities


Discussion:

The Federal Aviation Administration recently issued an approval for an Alternate Method of Compliance for fire-fighting operations only to Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2000-15-52 concerning Bell 204, 205 and 212 model helicopters. This approval allows the affected helicopters to continue to operate for an additional 50 hours time in service prior to compliance with the requirements of the AD.

Discussions with the Federal Aviation Administration, land management agency managers and aviation management personnel have concluded that the extension to the AD for fire-fighting purposes only is an added risk. The 50 hour extension does not provide an acceptable level of safety, as does the original AD, for our fire-fighting community.

Recommendation:

Commercial vendors affected will be identified by the appropriate procurement office and notified of this decision. The policy letter is printed on the reverse side of this document. All operators of Bell 204, 205, and 212 model helicopters must comply with AD 2000-15-52 prior to further use.


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August 1, 2000

Memorandum

To: All DOI and USFS Aviation Operations

From: Michael Martin, Acting Director, Office of Aircraft Services, DOI
Robert Martin, Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation Management, USFS

Subject: Federal Aviation Administration Airworthiness Directive 2000-15-52

This memorandum is written to clarify Department of the Interior and USDA-Forest Service implementation of Federal Aviation Administration Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2000-15-52.

On July 25, 2000 the FAA issued an Emergency AD pertaining to Bell 204B, 205A/A-1/B and 212 helicopters. The document is titled "AD 2000-15-52 Prevent Failure of a Mast or Trunnion, Separation of the Main Rotor System, and Subsequent Loss of Control of the Helicopter."

On July 28, 2000 the FAA issued a document titled "Alternate Method of Compliance to Airworthiness Directive 200-15-52." This document granted a "50 hour TIS [time in service] extension" for AD compliance to helicopters used for fire fighting.

Although the FAA's 50-hour extension was well-intentioned and was meant to support ongoing fire fighting operations, we believe it to be in the best interest of Interior and Forest Service employees to require contractors and cooperators to adhere to the original AD as written. The AD requires action "before further flight."

We are notifying contractors of this requirement and Safety Alerts are being published by each agency. This action has also been coordinated with Roger Erb, Chair, Multiagency Area Command group.

Michael Martin, Acting Director
Office of Aircraft Services
Department of the Interior

Robert Martin, Assistant Director
Fire and Aviation Management
USDA-Forest Service

cc: MAC group members