



SUBJ: EMERGENCY FLOTATION SECTION, Pop-Out Float Under-inflation.

SAIB: 2022-21

Date: November 21, 2022

This is information only. Recommendations aren't mandatory.

Introduction

This Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) alerts owners, operators, air agencies, suppliers, distributors, and certificated repairs facilities of **Robinson Helicopter Company (RHC) Model R44 and R44 II** helicopters of under-inflated pop-out floats due to improper packing in the event of a water landing.

At this time, the airworthiness concern is not considered an unsafe condition that would warrant airworthiness directive (AD) action under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 39.

Background

The FAA received a report from an operator stating that while performing a 3-year pop-out float inflation test, the left pop-out float under-inflated while the right pop-out float had abnormally high pressure. A pressure relief valve is installed to protect the pop-out floats during an overpressure event. The under-inflated float was due to a kinked hose in the D674-2 pop-out float inflation hose assembly, which resulted in the misalignment of the connector and the hose at the bottom of the landing gear strut. This condition, could possibly result in loss of buoyancy on one side, which may result in the helicopter capsizing.

Recommendations

The FAA recommends that owners, operators, air agencies, suppliers, distributors, and maintenance technicians ensure hose alignment prior to deflating and packing the floats. RHC has updated the Pop-out Float Installation procedure in the Robinson Model R44 Maintenance Manual to include instructions to perform this alignment by minimizing the preload on the hose.

For Further Information Contact

David Kim, Aerospace Engineer, Los Angeles ACO, 3960 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, CA 90712, United States; phone: (562) 627-5274; fax: (562) 627-5210; e-mail: david.kim@faa.gov.

For Related Service Information Contact

Robinson Helicopter Company, Technical Support Department, 2901 Airport Drive, Torrance, CA 90505; telephone (310) 539-0508; fax (310) 539-5198; email ts1@robinsonheli.com; or at robinsonheli.com.