

4 Safety Recommendations

The following safety recommendations have been made:

- 4.1 **Safety Recommendation 2002-025:** On 26 July 2002 it was recommended that The Federal Aviation Administration mandates appropriate action to ensure the continued airworthiness of Sikorsky S-76 main rotor blades which have either:

A two-piece leading edge titanium sheath (erosion strip).

or

Have suffered a lightning strike.

The FAA acted the same day by issuing an Emergency Airworthiness Directive

- 4.2 **Safety Recommendation 2004-037:** The Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation should, within Repair Procedure No 6, clearly specify a durable transparent patch material for covering cracks in the leading edge erosion covers of S-76 main rotor blades.

- 4.3 **Safety Recommendation 2004-038:** The Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation should ensure that new cracks in the leading edge erosion covers of S-76 main rotor blades are frequently monitored for growth by an appropriately qualified person and for a suitable period to ensure that the crack is not symptomatic of a deeper flaw within the blade.

- 4.4 **Safety Recommendation 2004-039:** The Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation should amend the S-76 Pre-flight Check and 50-Hour Inspection procedures to include a search for cracks in the upper and lower skins of main rotor blades. The procedures should prompt investigation of the underlying reason(s) for such cracks before the next flight.

- 4.5 **Safety Recommendation 2004-040:** It was recommended to the European Aviation Safety Agency and to the US Federal Aviation Administration that their Airworthiness Requirements for helicopters should ensure that any future design of main rotor blade that incorporates a hollow metal spar should be designed from the outset to incorporate an automatic onboard crack detection system covering spar areas which cannot readily be inspected and are not damage tolerant.

4.6 **Safety Recommendation 2004-041:** The UK Offshore Operators Association should amend its guidelines to include a responsibility on offshore installation operators to ensure that, for all flights between manned offshore installations, radio operators of such installations establish positive contact with the destination installation immediately after the departure of a helicopter and convey the relevant flight details such as persons on board and estimated time of arrival.

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