

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: June 20, 1972

Adopted by the NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
at its office in Washington, D. C.
on the 8th day of June 1972

FORWARDED TO:)
Honorable John H. Shaffer)
Administrator)
Federal Aviation Administration)
Washington, D. C. 20591)

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS A-72-61 & 62

The National Transportation Safety Board is currently investigating a fatal accident involving a Bell Model 205A-1 helicopter, N2256W, which crashed on May 29, 1972, while transporting an oil drilling crew to an offshore oil rig. The accident occurred 3 minutes after takeoff from Dulac, Louisiana. The pilot and the 10 passengers all received fatal injuries.

Examination of the failed tail rotor blade assembly revealed a fatigue failure within the threaded area of the blade grip. The fatigue pattern extended along a circumferential arc of approximately 160°, involving five of the blade grip's six internal retaining threads.

Maintenance records revealed no instances of prior damage to the tail rotor.

The subject tail rotor blade grip, P/N 204-011-728-13, S/N A3-16986, had a total service time of 993:10 hours. The service life of this part is 1,000 hours. Presently, there are no maintenance requirements to inspect the internal retaining threads in the tail rotor blade grips during its service life.

The results of the Board's on-going metallurgical examination will be made available to the Federal Aviation Administration as soon as it is completed.

Therefore, since this condition may exist with respect to other grips of the same configuration, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

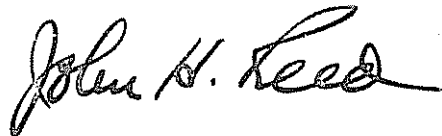
1. Require an inspection within 25 hours flight time of all Bell Model 204/205 tail rotor blade grips which have more than 500 hours or more in service for evidence of cracks or corrosion in the retaining thread areas.
2. Revise the present 1,000-hour retirement life of the subject blade grips to a more conservative figure or require periodic inspections based on the above finding.

Personnel from our Bureau of Aviation Safety have been in contact with your Flight Standards representatives and are aware you are initiating corrective action. The Board believes it is in consonance with your contemplated action; however, it also believes it should provide you with our thoughts on this matter for your consideration.

These recommendations will be released to the public on the issue date shown above. No public dissemination of the contents of this document should be made prior to that date.

Reed, Chairman; McAdams, Thayer, and Burgess, Members, concurred in the above recommendations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John H. Reed". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

John H. Reed
Chairman