

Helicopter Task Group update: Briefing on S-92 helicopter fleet

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The Helicopter Task Group has published the attached briefing concerning Sikorsky S-92 helicopters.

7. How are the cracks detected?

The gearbox feet are inspected every 10 flight hours in accordance with ASB92-63-020. Cracks are first identified visually and then confirmed through Non-Destructive Testing (NDT). This technique reveals flaws and defects in a material or device without damaging or destroying the test sample.

8. Does the 10 hours inspection include an NDT check?

The 10-hour check includes the use of NDT procedures if a crack is believed to exist through visual inspection.

9. Would reducing the number of take offs and landings help to prevent the cracking?

Sikorsky is conducting a thorough technical investigation now and as soon as they have reached conclusions that information will be made available; at this time there is no Sikorsky-recommended restriction on the number of take offs or landings that can be conducted on a particular flight. This is based on their analysis and testing.

10. Would reducing the payload help to prevent the cracking?

Sikorsky is conducting a thorough technical investigation now and as soon as they have reached conclusions that information will be made available; at this time there is no payload restriction in place.

The inspection procedures introduced through Sikorsky's Alert Service Bulletin, and in place with all helicopter operators, will identify and anomalies in the unlikely event that they appear.

11. The S-92 door vibrates in flight. Could this be contributing to the cracks?

Sikorsky is conducting a thorough technical investigation now and as soon as they have reached conclusions that information will be made available; it is very unlikely that any vibration in the door assembly is a contributory factor to this phenomena. See also the response to question 4.

12. Could the relative inexperience of the flight crews with the S-92 be a contributing factor?

No, not at all. The crews are all fully qualified to operate the aircraft and their continuous training regime ensures that standards are monitored at very regular intervals. In addition, the aircraft has a system called HUMS (Health Utilisation & Monitoring System) which monitors a wide range of aircraft parameters and warns if the aircraft is operated outside of design limitations.

13. Are the S-92s in Norway and other regions experiencing similar problems and do they fly similar flight patterns?

Yes, and the update letter recently issued by Sikorsky went to all operators world-wide.

14. Can safety reps be invited to see the actual failed equipment/ components and can they have pictures or presentation of what the failure looks like?

Sikorsky will provide photographs of the broken foot from their Materials Laboratory some time next week.

15. Could pilots and engineers come offshore to reassure the population? Where can passengers get further information?

All helicopter operators will work closely with their clients' aviation departments to ensure that the fullest information is available for briefing passengers travelling offshore in whatever form that has to take. Passengers that have concerns which could not be answered by this briefing should contact their employer's aviation / logistics department in the first instance. If questions remain after this, passengers can send an e-mail directly to the Helicopter Task Group which will seek to provide an answer as soon as possible. helitaskgroup@oilandgasuk.co.uk

If you would like to find out more about any of the issues outlined above, please contact the helicopter task group on helitaskgroup@oilandgasuk.co.uk

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