



**U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration**

SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 11008
DATE: 6/2/20

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo

A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO. The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Subject: The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) Safety Advisory Notice AO-2011-016-SAN-001 regarding the accident attributed to the hydraulic flight control system on the Robinson R44 helicopters.

Purpose: This SAFO alerts operators and maintainers of the issue with the Robinson R44 helicopters hydraulic flight control system and to inform the audience of the Safety Advisory Notice AO-2011-016-SAN-001. The Safety Advisory Notice issued by the ATSB in response to a fatal Robinson R44 accident.

Background: On February 04, 2011 at 11:15 local, a Robinson R44 helicopter was conducting pilot evaluations at Cessnock Aerodrome in New South Wales, Australia. Onboard the helicopter were a flight instructor, a pilot and passenger. After landing the aircraft, as part of a simulated failure of the flight control hydraulic system, the instructor elected to reposition the helicopter to the apron. As the helicopter became airborne, it became uncontrollable and collided with the runway and caught fire that resulted in two fatalities out of the three aircraft occupants. When the investigation concluded, it was determined that a hydraulic flight control bolt and fastener had detached, rendering the aircraft uncontrollable. The ATSB has released the final report that confirms their initial findings from the preliminary report. Based on the accident investigation, the ATSB issued Safety Advisory Notice AO-2011-016-SAN-001. The final investigation report can be found at the following link:

http://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/2011/air/ao-2011-016.aspx.

Discussion: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) encourages all operators and maintainers to inspect the hydraulic flight control system on the Robinson R44 helicopters and to ensure the correct installation of the self-locking nuts and attaching fittings.

Recommended Action: The FAA recommends that operators and maintainers take the necessary actions to inspect the hydraulic flight control system on the Robinson R44 helicopters and review the manufactures service bulletin(s) relevant to the system.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this SAFO should be directed to the Aircraft Maintenance Division's General Aviation Branch at 202-267-1675.