



SERVICE LETTER

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FL-1

DATE: 10 FEBRUARY 1984
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*Include a copy of this Letter in the Notice/Letter file for each affected model.

TO: All owners and operators of Hughes Helicopters

SURPLUS OR BOGUS 369D21100 SERIES MAIN ROTOR BLADES

MODELS AFFECTED: All Model 369D, 369E, 369F, 369H, 369HE, 369HM and 369HS Series Helicopters.

Hughes Helicopters has recently obtained five bogus main rotor blades which had been sold to a 369D owner/operator as 369D21100 blades. The blades were in fact, surplus military blades (PN 369A1100 Series) designed for the OH-6A and sold by HHI to the U. S. Army in 1967/8. The identification plate and markings on the blades had been altered to reflect the 369D21100 blade configuration. When these blades were examined by Hughes, there were no records with them to indicate total time in service. Such blades are not designed for use with 369D helicopters and must not be used under any circumstances.

It is possible that more of these bogus main rotor blades have been sold. These blades have probably exceeded their FAA assigned service life. If used, they could fail, causing an accident in which personal injury could occur. In addition, use of these blades could void insurance claims.

Any main rotor blade acquired from other than a Hughes authorized Service Center or Distributor must be considered suspect, and should be checked closely to determine if it is an authentic 369D21100 Series blade, or if it is an altered 369A1100 Series main rotor blade designed for use on OH-6A and Hughes 369H Series helicopters. Because the 369D blade required improved structural design to accommodate increased loads at higher airspeeds, the following checks can be made to determine if a suspect blade is an authentic 369D blade, or an altered 369A Series blade:

- (1). The coin tap test can be used to identify the number of ribs in the blade. Carefully tap along the length of the blade, from the tip end, using a heavy coin, e.g., U. S. quarter, half dollar, or equivalent. Note the number of ribs in the blade by the difference in sound. The 369D blade has 20 ribs, 1.5 inches apart, beginning 1.5 inches from the blade tip. The 369A Series blade has only four ribs, three inches apart, beginning three inches from the blade tip. (See figure 1.)
- (2). The bogus 369D blades have a painted over, flush plug installed to fill a 0.218 - 0.224 inch diameter hole required in all 369A1100 Series blades. (See figure 1.) There is no such hole or plug in 369D blades

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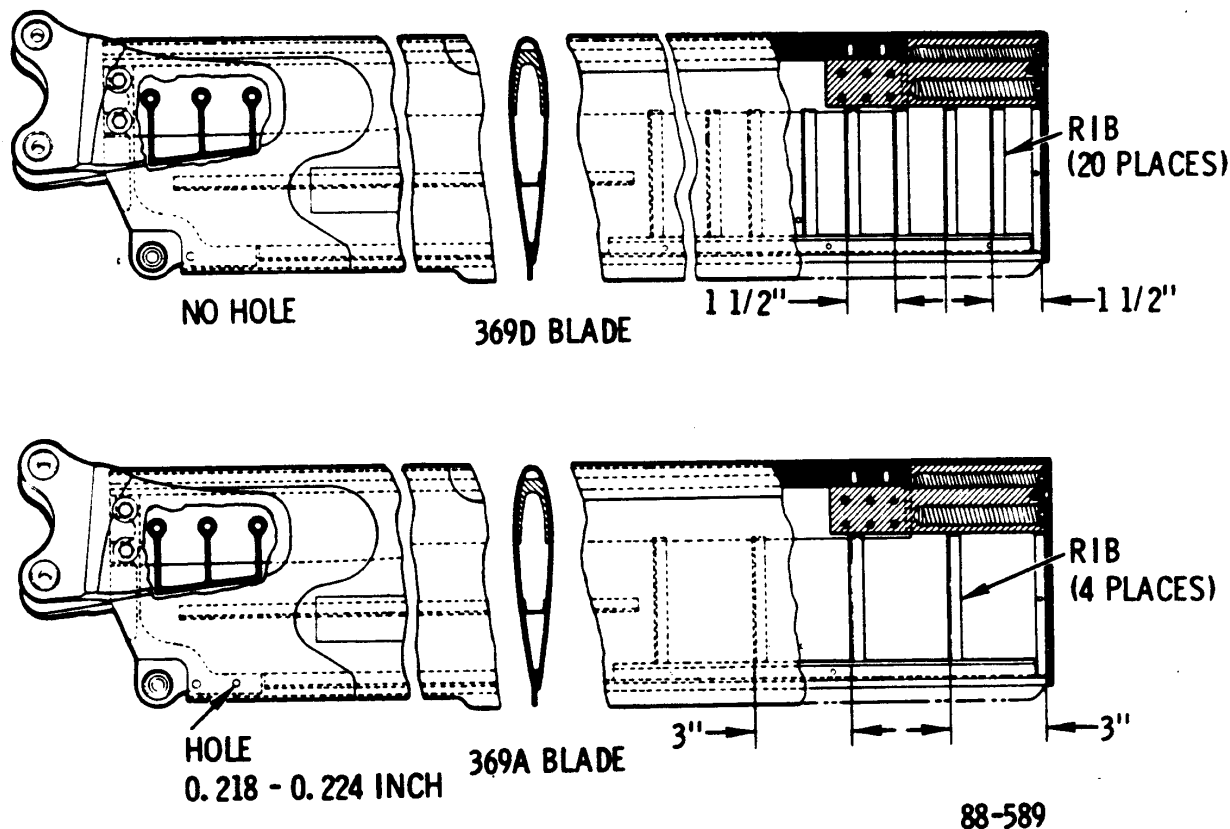


Figure 1. Bogus 369D Main Rotor Blade Identification

Any main rotor blade found that has been altered or suspected of having been altered, should be removed from service or spares inventory immediately. Contact Hughes Customer Service Department, or your Hughes Service Center if any such blades are found, or if you have any questions concerning this matter.

We have also received information concerning a PN 369A1200-501 main rotor hub, serial No. 3425, that we suspect does not meet our quality standards. Owner/operators who have had the main rotor hub replaced within the last six months should ascertain whether this particular hub is installed. When purchasing a main rotor hub from other than a Hughes approved source, be aware that bogus hubs are being marketed. If you find that the suspect hub, serial No. 3425, has been installed on your helicopter, or if anyone attempts to sell you a main rotor hub you suspect is not authentic, please notify Hughes Customer Service Department immediately.

Edward Koch, Manager,
Customer Service Department
Hughes Helicopters, Inc.