

Bell Helicopter **TEXTRON**

A Subsidiary of Textron, Inc.

January 31, 2003

INFORMATION LETTER GEN-03-88

TO: All Owners/Operators of Bell Helicopters

SUBJECT: Defective NAS516-1A Grease Fittings

It has been reported that defective NAS516-1A grease fittings have been found in Bell inventory at Mirabel Canada and Fort Worth Texas. There is a possibility that parts with defective NAS516-1A grease fittings may have been delivered to customers. Additionally the NAS516-1 grease fittings have been superseded by the NAS516-1A grease fitting, therefore the assemblies affected include those that call for the -1. It is also possible that customers may have defective NAS516-1A grease fittings in their spare stock as individual grease fittings and in spare next higher assemblies. A defective NAS516-1A grease fitting could result in the following conditions:

- 1) The seal-ball may not return to a sealing position after grease application gun is removed from the grease fitting.
- 2) The ball and spring inside the grease fitting housing may be forced out of the grease fitting housing during the introduction of grease via the grease gun. This condition could result in:
 - a. The grease passage will become blocked, possibly preventing grease from reaching the bearing during the lubrication procedure.
 - b. The ball and/or spring entering the bearing. This condition could result in degradation of the bearing over time.

Recommended actions to be taken in the field:

- Operators should check the function of installed NAS 516-1/1A grease fittings by verifying the presence of the ball and spring. Verify operation by using the chuck end of a 3/64-inch twist drill or similar size item and press on the ball with enough force to unseat the ball and bottom the spring. Exercise judgment and be careful not to press with excessive force and press the ball of a good fitting out or deform the seating spring. Note the feel of the ball and spring. Should the ball press through the fitting prior to the spring bottoming or the spring not returning and seating the ball, then the fitting is defective and should be replaced.