

accomplish this replacement, and that the average labor rate is approximately \$60 an hour. Parts cost approximately \$20 per sailplane. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$4,200, or \$140 per sailplane.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein will not have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. A copy of the final evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

98-06-37 Alexander Schleicher

Segelflugzeugbau: Amendment 39-10416; Docket No. 97-CE-107-AD.

Applicability: Model ASK-21 sailplanes, serial numbers 21 001 through 21 196, certificated in any category, that are

equipped with a tow release cable assembly that does not have a swivel-type end.

Note 1: This AD applies to each sailplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For sailplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required within the next 3 calendar months after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent the inability to release the tow rope because of the design of the cable assembly, which could result in loss of control of the sailplane during towing operations, accomplish the following:

(a) Replace any tow release cable assembly that does not have a swivel-type end with a tow release cable assembly that does have a swivel-type end in accordance with Alexander Schleicher Technical Note No. 10, dated October 10, 1983.

(b) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the sailplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an equivalent level of safety may be approved by the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Small Airplane Directorate.

(d) Questions or technical information related to Alexander Schleicher Technical Note No. 10, dated October 10, 1983, should be directed to Alexander Schleicher Segelflugzeugbau, 6416 Poppenhausen, Wasserkuppe, Federal Republic of Germany; telephone: 49.6658.890 or 49.6658.8920; facsimile: 49.6658.8923 or 49.6658.8940. This service information may be examined at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

(e) The replacement required by this AD shall be done in accordance with Alexander Schleicher Technical Note No. 10, dated October 10, 1983. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Alexander Schleicher Segelflugzeugbau, 6416 Poppenhausen,

Wasserkuppe, Federal Republic of Germany. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri, or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in German AD No. 84-2, dated January 13, 1984.

(f) This amendment (39-10416) becomes effective on April 28, 1998.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on March 11, 1998.

Michael Gallagher,

Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-7249 Filed 3-19-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-22-AD; Amendment 39-10410]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320-111 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Direct final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Airbus Model A320-111 series airplanes. This amendment requires repetitive inspections to detect cracking around the attachment holes for the access panels in the lower skin of the wing; and repair, if necessary. This amendment is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified in this AD are intended to detect and correct such cracking, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

DATES: Effective June 18, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of June 18, 1998.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before April 20, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-

22-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Norman B. Martenson, Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2110; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Airbus Model A320-111 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that it has received a report of cracking detected during fatigue testing on a test article; the cracks were found around the attachment holes for the access panels in the lower skin of the wing, between ribs 13 and 22. Such cracking, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A320-57-1056, Revision 1, dated July 15, 1997, including Appendix 1, which describes procedures for repetitive high frequency eddy current inspections to detect cracking around the attachment holes for the access panels in the lower skin of the wing, between ribs 13 and 22 (skin panel number 2, left and right sides); and repair, if necessary. The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 97-083-096(B), dated March 12, 1997, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC, reviewed all available

information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of Requirements of Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, this AD is being issued to require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

Differences Between the Rule and the Service Information

Operators should note that, although the previously described service bulletin specifies that the manufacturer may be contacted for disposition of certain repair conditions, this AD requires the repair of those conditions to be accomplished in accordance with a method approved by the FAA.

Cost Impact

Currently, there are approximately 118 Airbus Model A320-111 airplanes of U.S. registry. However, the FAA has determined that none of these U.S.-registered airplanes will be affected by this AD. Therefore, there is no future economic cost impact of this rule on U.S. operators.

Should an affected airplane be imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, it would require approximately 8 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required inspection, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this AD would be \$480 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The Direct Final Rule Procedure

The FAA anticipates that this regulation will not result in adverse or negative comment and, therefore, is issuing it as a direct final rule. The requirements of this direct final rule address and unsafe condition identified by a foreign civil airworthiness authority and do not impose a significant burden on affected operators. In accordance with 14 CFR 11.17, unless a written adverse or negative comment, or a written notice of intent to submit an adverse or negative comment, is received within the comment period, the regulation will become effective on the date specified above. After the close of the comment period, the FAA will publish a document in the **Federal Register** indicating that no adverse or negative comments were received; at that time, the AD number will be specified, and the date on which the

final rule will become effective will be confirmed. If the FAA does receive, within the comment period, a written adverse or negative comment, or written notice of intent to submit such a comment, a document withdrawing the direct final rule will be published in the **Federal Register**, and a notice of proposed rulemaking may be published with a new comment period.

Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule and was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket Number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified under the caption **ADDRESSES**. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the AD action and determining whether additional rulemaking action would be needed.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the rule that might suggest a need to modify the rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this AD will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this rule must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 98-NM-22-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein will not have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

The FAA has determined that this regulation is noncontroversial and unlikely to result in adverse or negative comments. For reasons discussed in the preamble, I certify that this regulation (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Airbus: Amendment 39-10410. Docket 98-NM-22-AD.

Applicability: Model A320-111 series airplanes, as identified in Airbus Service Bulletin A320-57-1056, Revision 1, dated July 15, 1997, including Appendix 1; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To detect and correct cracking around the attachment holes for the access panels in the

lower skin of the wing, between ribs 13 and 22 (skin panel number 2, left and right sides), which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 20,000 total flight cycles, or within 60 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later: Perform a high frequency eddy current inspection to detect cracking around the attachment holes for the access panels in the lower skin of the wing, between ribs 13 and 22; in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-57-1056, Revision 1, dated July 15, 1997, including Appendix 1. Thereafter, repeat the inspection at intervals not to exceed 15,000 flight cycles.

(b) If any crack is detected during any inspection required by this AD, and the applicable service bulletin specifies to contact the manufacturer for an appropriate action: Prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(e) The actions shall be done in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-57-1056, Revision 1, dated July 15, 1997, including Appendix 1. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 97-083-096(B), dated March 12, 1997.

(f) This amendment becomes effective on June 18, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 11, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 98-6947 Filed 3-19-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-SW-66-AD; Amendment 39-10418; AD 98-06-39]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS 332C, L, L1, and L2 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to Eurocopter France Model AS 332C, L, L1, and L2 helicopters. This action requires determining the thickness of the shim washers, inspecting certain cockpit door hinge tenons (hinge tenons) for cracks, and if a crack is found, replacing the hinge tenon with an airworthy hinge tenon. This amendment is prompted by several reports of cracked hinge tenons due to improper shimming. The actions specified in this AD are intended to detect cracks in the hinge tenons due to unintended loading of the improperly shimmed tenons caused by closing the door, which may lead to separation of the door from the helicopter, impact with the main rotor or tail rotor system, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Effective April 6, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of April 6, 1998.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before May 19, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-SW-66-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from American Eurocopter Corporation, 2701 Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, Texas 75053-4005, telephone (972) 641-3460, fax (972) 641-3527. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.