

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:

British Aerospace Airbus Limited (Formerly British Aerospace Commercial Aircraft Limited, British Aerospace Aircraft Group): Docket 98–NM–51–AD.

Applicability: All Model BAC 1–11 200 and 400 series airplanes, 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 in the trunnion fittings of the nose landing gear (NLG), which could lead to collapse of the NLG during takeoff and landing, and possible injury to the flight crew and passengers, accomplish the following:

(a) Perform a detailed visual inspection for cracking on the left- and right-hand trunnion fittings of the NLG, in the area of the trunnion cap attachment holes, in accordance with British Aerospace Alert Service Bulletin 53–A–PM6035, Revision 1, dated March 7, 1996; at the time specified in paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD, as applicable.

(1) For airplanes on which British Aerospace Modification PM5308 has not been accomplished: Perform the inspection within 6 years after the effective date of this AD, or within 11 years after the last inspection accomplished in accordance with the alert service bulletin, whichever occurs later. Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 11 years.

(2) For airplanes on which British Aerospace Modification PM5308 has been accomplished: Perform the inspection within 30 months after the effective date of this AD, or within 5 years after the last inspection accomplished in accordance with the alert service bulletin, whichever occurs later. Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 6 years.

(b) If any crack is found during any inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, prior to further flight, repair the crack 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 §§ 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.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in the British airworthiness directive 004–03–96, dated April 26, 1996.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 15, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–10475 Filed 4–20–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–NM–81–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 and A300–600 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Airbus Model A300 and all Model A300–600 series airplanes. This proposal would require a one-time inspection for cracking of the gantry lower flanges in the main landing gear (MLG) bay area; and repair, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect and correct cracking of the gantry lower flanges in the MLG bay area, which could result in decompression of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 21, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–NM–81–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule 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.

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:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed 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 above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed 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 summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: “Comments to Docket Number 98–NM–81–AD.” The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the

FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-81-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

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 A300 and all Model A300-600 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that, during an inspection on a Model A300-600 series airplane, cracks were found at 20,600 flight cycles between left-hand frames 51 and 52 on the gantry (frame support structure) lower flange 4 in the main landing gear (MLG) bay area. In addition, the DGAC advises that, during an inspection on a Model A300-600 series airplane, cracks were found at 16,800 flight cycles between right-hand frames 50B, 51A, and 52A and at left-hand frame 50B on the gantry lower flange 5. Such cracking, if not corrected, could result in decompression of the airplane.

The cause of the cracking in this area is still under investigation. However, the gantry lower flanges on certain Model A300 series airplanes are identical in design to those on Model A300-600 series airplanes; therefore, both models may be subject to the same unsafe condition.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued All Operators Telex (AOT) 53-11, dated October 13, 1997, which describes procedures for a one-time ultrasonic inspection for cracking of the gantry lower flanges in the MLG bay area. This AOT also describes procedures for repair of cracks. The repair involves stop drilling of cracks as a temporary repair, or installing a doubler on the gantry lower flange to reinforce the area. The DGAC classified this AOT as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 97-372-236(B), dated December 3, 1997, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

FAA's Conclusions

These airplane models are manufactured in France and are type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of § 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 Proposed 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, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the AOT described previously, except as discussed below.

Interim Action

This is considered to be interim action until final action is identified, at which time the FAA may consider further rulemaking.

Differences Between Proposed Rule and Service Information

Operators should note that, unlike the procedures described in Airbus AOT 53-11, dated October 13, 1997, this proposed AD would not permit further flight if cracks are detected in the gantry lower flanges in the MLG bay area. The FAA has determined that, because of the safety implications and consequences associated with such cracking, any subject gantry lower flange that is found to be cracked must be repaired or modified prior to further flight.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 67 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD. It would take approximately 4 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on this figure, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$16,080, or \$240 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would 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 proposal would not have sufficient

federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under the 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 the draft regulatory 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, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 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 Industrie: Docket 98-NM-81-AD.

Applicability: Model A300 series airplanes on which Airbus Modification 3474 has been accomplished, and all Model A300-600 series airplanes; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise 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 (b) 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 of the gantry lower flanges in the main landing gear (MLG) bay area, which could result in

decompression of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 16,300 total flight cycles, or within 500 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform a one-time ultrasonic inspection for cracking of the gantry lower flanges in the MLG bay area, in accordance with Airbus All Operators Telex (AOT) 53-11, dated October 13, 1997.

(1) If any cracking is detected, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with the AOT.

(2) If no cracking is detected, no further action is required by this AD.

(b) 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, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. 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.

(c) 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.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 97-372-236(B), dated December 3, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 15, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-10488 Filed 4-20-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-100-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive,

detailed visual inspections of the windshield wiper assembly for discrepant conditions, and corrective actions, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the windshield wiper assembly, which could result in loss of visibility, damage to the propeller(s), or penetration of the fuselage skin and consequent depressurization of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 21, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-100-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Saab Aircraft AB, SAAB Aircraft Product Support, S-581.88, Linköping, Sweden. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

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:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed 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 above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed 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 summarizing each FAA-public contact

concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 98-NM-100-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-100-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The Luftfartsverket (LFV), which is the airworthiness authority for Sweden, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B series airplanes. The LFV advises that it has received reports indicating that a windshield wiper blade separated from the wiper arm at the attachment point, which consists of two rivets that connect the wiper blade and arm tip to the wiper arm. On one airplane, the wiper blade struck and damaged a propeller and was thrown into the side of the airplane. The cause of the detachment of the blade has been attributed to the failure of the two rivets. Such failure could result in loss of visibility, damage to the propeller(s), or penetration of the fuselage skin and consequent depressurization of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The manufacturer has issued SAAB Service Bulletin 340-30-081, dated November 14, 1997, including Attachment 1, Revision 1, dated September 14, 1997, which describes procedures for a one-time, detailed visual inspection of the windshield wiper assembly for discrepant conditions (corrosion; excessive wear; missing, loose, or broken parts; improper alignment; and insecure attachment), and corrective actions, if necessary. The corrective actions include repairing the arm tip assembly or replacing it with a new or serviceable part, if necessary. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The LFV classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued Swedish airworthiness directive 1-115R1, dated