

alternative methods of compliance with this AD.

**Note 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

#### Special Flight Permits

(g) 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 4:** The subject of this AD is addressed in Swedish airworthiness directives 1-113R1 and 1-114R1, both dated September 8, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 21, 2000.

Donald L. Riffin,

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
[FR Doc. 00-7459 Filed 3-24-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2000-NM-22-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320-232 and -233 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 A320-232 and -233 series airplanes. This proposal would require replacement of the fuel metering units (FMU) of each engine with new FMU's. 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 an inadvertent increase in thrust, which could result in reduced controllability of the airplane during final approach.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by April 26, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2000-NM-22-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, 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 2000-NM-22-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. 2000-NM-22-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

##### Discussion

The Direction Generale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France,

recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Airbus Model A320-232 and -233 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that an inadvertent increase of thrust can occur during a critical phase of flight. Investigation revealed that the cause of the inadvertent increase of thrust is due to a malfunction of the high flow fuel metering unit (FMU), which controls the fuel flow to the engines. This condition, if not corrected, could result in reduced controllability of the airplane during final approach.

#### Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The manufacturer has issued Airbus Service Bulletin A320-73-1067, dated August 11, 1999, which describes procedures for replacement of the FMU of each engine with new FMU's. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin will permit the operators with a mixed fleet (Models A319 and A320 series airplanes) to have a single common FMU, which will eliminate the possibility of inadvertent increase of thrust due to a malfunction of the FMU. The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 2000-005-143(B), dated January 12, 2000, 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 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 replacement of the high flow FMU of each engine with new FMU's. The

actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

#### Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 77 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 14 work hours per airplane (7 work hours per engine) to accomplish the proposed replacements, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the manufacturer or vendor at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$64,680, or \$840 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 a substantial direct effect 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, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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 2000-NM-22-AD.

**Applicability:** Model A320-232 and -233 series airplanes, certificated in any category, except those airplanes on which Airbus Modification 27146 or 28006 has been installed, or on which Airbus Service Bulletin A320-73-1067 has been accomplished.

**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 prevent an inadvertent increase in thrust, which could result in reduced controllability of the airplane during final approach, accomplish the following:

#### Replacement

(a) Within 12 months after the effective date of this AD, replace the fuel metering units (FMU) of each engine with new FMU's in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-73-1067, dated August 11, 1999.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(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.

#### Special Flight Permits

(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 2000-005-143(B), dated January 12, 2000.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 21, 2000.

**Donald L. Riggins,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 00-7458 Filed 3-24-00; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2000-NM-23-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 replacing the smoke detectors in the cargo compartment with new, improved smoke detectors. 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 false smoke warnings from the cargo compartment smoke detectors, which could result in aborted takeoffs, diversions of flight routes, and emergency evacuation of flight crew and passengers.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by April 26, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2000-NM-23-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