

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0414; Product Identifier 2017-NM-159-AD; Amendment 39-19417; AD 2018-19-17]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus SAS Model A300 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by a revision of a certain airworthiness limitations item (ALI) document, which specifies new or more restrictive instructions and airworthiness limitations. This AD requires revising the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or revised structural inspection requirements. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective October 29, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of October 29, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAW, Rond-Point Emile Dewoitine No: 2, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email account.airworth-eas@airbus.com; internet <http://www.airbus.com>. You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0414.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0414; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the regulatory evaluation, any

comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations (phone: 800-647-5527) is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3225.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Discussion**

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all Airbus SAS Model A300 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the **Federal Register** on May 25, 2018 (83 FR 24240). The NPRM was prompted by a revision of a certain ALI document, which specifies new or more restrictive instructions and airworthiness limitations. The NPRM proposed to require revising the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or revised structural inspection requirements.

We are issuing this AD to address fatigue cracking, damage, and corrosion in principal structural elements; such fatigue cracking, damage, and corrosion could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2017-0207, dated October 12, 2017 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus SAS Model A300 series airplanes. The MCAI states:

The airworthiness limitations for the Airbus A300 aeroplanes, which are approved by EASA, are currently defined and published in the Airbus A300 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) documents. The Damage Tolerant Airworthiness Limitation Items are specified in the A300 ALS Part 2. These instructions have been identified as mandatory for continuing airworthiness.

Failure to accomplish these instructions could result in an unsafe condition.

EASA previously issued [EASA] AD 2015-0115 [which corresponds to FAA AD 2017-04-05, Amendment 39-18800 (82 FR 11134, February 21, 2017) (“AD 2017-04-05”)] to require compliance with the maintenance requirements and associated airworthiness limitations defined in Airbus A300 ALS Part 2 Revision 02.

Since that [EASA] AD was issued, new or more restrictive maintenance requirements

and airworthiness limitations were approved by EASA. Consequently, Airbus published Revision 03 of the A300 ALS Part 2, compiling all ALS Part 2 changes approved since previous Revision 02.

For the reason described above, this [EASA] AD retains the requirements of EASA AD 2015-0115, which is superseded, and requires accomplishment of the actions specified in Airbus A300 ALS Part 2 Revision 03.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0414.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this final rule. We have considered the comment received. Laney Azevedo stated that he supports the NPRM.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this final rule as proposed, except for minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM for addressing the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM.

Related Service Information Under 14 CFR Part 51

Airbus SAS has issued Airbus A300 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS), Part 2—Damage Tolerant Airworthiness Limitation Items (DT—ALI), Revision 03, dated August 28, 2017. This service information describes airworthiness limitations applicable to the DT—ALI. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 6 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

We have determined that revising the maintenance or inspection program takes an average of 90 work-hours per operator, although we recognize that this number may vary from operator to operator. In the past, we have estimated that this action takes 1 work-hour per airplane. Since operators incorporate maintenance or inspection program changes for their affected fleet(s), we

have determined that a per-operator estimate is more accurate than a per-airplane estimate. Therefore, we estimate the total cost per operator to be \$7,650 (90 work-hours × \$85 per work-hour).

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: "General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes and associated appliances to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

- (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),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) 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.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

2018–19–17 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39–19417; Docket No. FAA–2018–0414; Product Identifier 2017–NM–159–AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective October 29, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

This AD affects AD 2017–04–05, Amendment 39–18800 (82 FR 11134, February 21, 2017) ("AD 2017–04–05").

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all Airbus SAS Model A300 B2–1A, B2–1C, B2K–3C, B2–203, B4–2C, B4–103, and B4–203 airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 05, Time Limits/Maintenance Checks.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a revision of a certain airworthiness limitations item (ALI) document, which specifies new or more restrictive instructions and airworthiness limitations. We are issuing this AD to address fatigue cracking, damage, and corrosion in principal structural elements; such fatigue cracking, damage, and corrosion could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Maintenance or Inspection Program Revision

Within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, revise the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate the information specified in Airbus A300 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS), Part 2—Damage Tolerant Airworthiness Limitation Items (DT–ALI), Revision 03,

dated August 28, 2017. The initial compliance times for doing the tasks are at the applicable times specified in Airbus A300 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS), Part 2—Damage Tolerant Airworthiness Limitation Items (DT–ALI), Revision 03, dated August 28, 2017, or within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(h) No Alternative Actions or Intervals

After accomplishment of the revision required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (e.g., inspections) or intervals, may be used unless the actions or intervals are approved as an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j)(1) of this AD.

(i) Terminating Action

Accomplishing the action in paragraph (g) of this AD terminates the requirements of AD 2017–04–05.

(j) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Section, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(k) Related Information

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA AD 2017–0207, dated October 12, 2017, for related information. This MCAI may be found in the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0414.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206–231–3225.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference

(IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Airbus A300 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS), Part 2—Damage Tolerant Airworthiness Limitation Items (DT-ALI), Revision 03, dated August 28, 2017. The first page of this document does not have a date.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAW, Rond-Point Emile Dewoitine No: 2, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email account.airworth-eas@airbus.com; internet <http://www.airbus.com>.

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202–741–6030, or go to: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on September 10, 2018.

Michael Kaszycki,

Acting Director, System Oversight Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–20346 Filed 9–21–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 93

[Docket No.: FAA–2018–0851; Amdt. Nos. 93–102]

RIN 2120–AL22

Removal of Flight Plan Requirements for Commercial Air Tour Operations Within the Special Flight Rules Area at Grand Canyon National Park

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule removes the requirement for certificate holders conducting certain commercial operations within the Grand Canyon National Park Special Flight Rules Area to file a visual flight rules flight plan with an FAA Flight Service Station prior to each flight. The effect of this action is to remove an unnecessary, redundant, and obsolete paperwork burden on affected certificate holders

without affecting safety, existing quarterly reporting requirements, or efforts to restore the natural quiet of the park environment. This final rule also makes several technical amendments.

DATES: This final rule is effective on November 23, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For technical questions concerning this action, contact Monica Buenrostro, Air Transportation Division, 135 Air Carrier Operations Branch, AFS–250, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20591; telephone 202–267–8166; email: Monica.C.Buenrostro@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Good Cause for Immediate Adoption

Section 553(b)(3)(B) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C.) authorizes agencies to dispense with notice and comment procedures for rules when the agency for “good cause” finds that those procedures are “impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest.” Under this section, an agency, upon finding good cause, may issue a final rule without seeking comment prior to the rulemaking. The FAA finds good cause to issue this final rule without seeking prior comment for the reasons explained below.

FAA regulations limit the number of commercial air tours certain operators may conduct over the Grand Canyon. Existing regulations at 14 CFR 93.323 require certain operators to file visual flight rule (VFR) flight plans with the FAA prior to each commercial Special Flight Rules Area operation (commercial SFRA operation) ¹ in the Grand Canyon National Park Special Flight Rules Area (GCNP SFRA), ostensibly so that the FAA can verify the number of commercial tours the operator conducts. The FAA has found VFR flight plans to be an unreliable method for verifying compliance, however, and no longer uses them for this purpose. Instead, the

¹ “Commercial Special Flight Rules Area Operation means any portion of any flight within the Grand Canyon National Park Special Flight Rules Area that is conducted by a certificate holder that has operations specifications authorizing flights within the Grand Canyon National Park Special Flight Rules Area. This term does not include operations conducted under an FAA Form 7711–1, Certificate of Waiver or Authorization. The types of flights covered by this definition are set forth in the “Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office Grand Canyon National Park Special Flight Rules Area Procedures Manual” which is available from the Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office.” 14 CFR 93.303. The relevant manual is now known as the “Grand Canyon National Park Special Flight Rules Area Procedures Manual” and is available from the Nevada Flight Standards District Office, formerly the Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office.

FAA relies on documents required by other FAA regulations to provide an accurate count of the number of commercial air tour flights these operators conduct. Continuing to require these flight plans constitutes an unjustified burden on GCNP SFRA commercial tour operators because the FAA does not use them for any other purpose.

Accordingly, the FAA has determined that good cause exists to forego notice and comment under Section 553(b)(3)(B) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 551 *et seq.*) because it is unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. Seeking prior comment is unnecessary because, irrespective of the public response, the VFR flight plans would remain redundant and obsolete. In addition, it would be contrary to the public interest to expend resources seeking comment under these circumstances. Considering that there is no way for FAA to use the required filings for the purpose intended, it would not be a prudent use of resources to ask for comment on whether the requirement should remain in place. Finally, it is unnecessary to seek public comment on the remaining technical amendments in this rule because they merely update references to appropriate FAA offices.

Authority for This Rulemaking

The FAA’s authority to issue rules on aviation safety is found in title 49 of the United States Code (U.S.C.). Subtitle I, sections 106(f) and (g), describe the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII of title 49, Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the agency’s authority. This rulemaking is promulgated under the general authority described in 49 U.S.C. 106(f) and 44701 and the specific authority found in Section 3 of Public Law 100–91 (August 18, 1987).

Section 3 directed the Department of the Interior (DOI) to submit recommendations, and the FAA to implement those recommendations, regarding actions necessary for the protection of resources in the Grand Canyon from adverse impacts associated with aircraft overflights. Congress directed that the recommendations provide for substantial restoration of the natural quiet and experience of the park and protection of public health and safety from adverse effects associated with aircraft overflight. Subsequently, in a 1996 Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies to address the impact of transportation in national parks, the President directed the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations for the GCNP that would