

Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-NM-211-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB 2000 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 2000 series airplanes. This proposal would require performing a one-time inspection of the dropout boxes of the passenger oxygen system to detect discrepancies and determine whether the system operates properly; correcting any discrepancy found; and reworking or installing new components, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by a report indicating that the oxygen system failed to operate correctly after activation at a low cabin pressure due to the incorrect installation of the oxygen masks or oxygen generators during manufacturing. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to ensure that a sufficient supply of oxygen is provided to airplane passengers in the event of rapid decompression of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by July 3, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-NM-211-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, Linkping, Sweden. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ruth Harder, Aerospace Engineer, Standardization Branch, ANM-113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-1721; 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 96-NM-211-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-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-NM-211-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 2000 series airplanes. The LFV advises of reports indicating that the passenger oxygen system failed to operate correctly in an airplane after activation at a low cabin pressure due to the improper packing of the mask assemblies or incorrect installation of the oxygen generators or masks during manufacturing. The following failures were noted for some of the oxygen system components:

1. Lids to the dropout boxes did not open.
2. Oxygen mask hoses became disconnected from the generator outlet connections.
3. Oxygen masks were not released from the dropout boxes.

In addition, subsequent inspection of the passenger oxygen system on one Model SAAB 2000 series airplane revealed that two oxygen generators were released along with the oxygen masks, which indicates that the oxygen mask assembly was incorrectly packed in the dropout boxes.

Improper functioning of the passenger oxygen system, if not corrected, could result in an insufficient supply of oxygen being provided to airplane passengers in the event of rapid decompression of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Saab has issued Service Bulletin 2000-35-001, dated February 20, 1996, which describes procedures for performing a one-time inspection of the dropout boxes of the passenger oxygen system to detect discrepancies and determine whether the system operates properly; correcting any discrepancy found; and reworking or installing new components, if necessary.

The LFV classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued Swedish airworthiness directive (SAD) 1-091, dated February 20, 1996, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in Sweden.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in Sweden 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 LFV has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the LFV, 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 performing a one-time inspection of the dropout boxes of the passenger oxygen system to detect discrepancies and determine whether the system operates properly; correcting any discrepancy found; and reworking or installing new components, if necessary. These actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 3 Saab Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 3 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$540, or \$180 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:

SAAB Aircraft AB: Docket 96-NM-211-AD.

Applicability: Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes, having serial numbers -003 through -039 inclusive; 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 prevent an insufficient supply of oxygen being provided to airplane passengers in the event of rapid decompression of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, perform a one-time inspection of the dropout boxes of the passenger oxygen system to detect discrepancies and determine whether the system operates properly, in accordance with the Accomplishment

Instructions of Saab Service Bulletin 2000-35-001, dated February 20, 1996.

(1) If the passenger oxygen system operates properly and no discrepancy is found in this system, no further action is required by this AD.

(2) If any discrepancy is found in the passenger oxygen system, prior to further flight, perform rework or install new components, as applicable, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(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, Standardization Branch, ANM-113, 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, Standardization Branch, ANM-113.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Standardization Branch, ANM-113.

(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.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 16, 1997.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 97-13468 Filed 5-21-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-NM-213-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB 2000 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 2000 series airplanes. This proposal would require the deactivation of certain floor mat heaters in the cabin area. In addition, this proposal would provide for optional terminating action for that deactivation. This proposal is prompted by a report indicating that a flight attendant's floor mat heater became overheated as a result of a short circuit between a floor mat heater and a floor