

regulatory evaluation prepared for this action has been placed 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 a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

SOCATA—Groupe Aerospatiale: Docket No. 97-CE-77-AD.

Applicability: Models TB9, TB10, TB20, TB21, and TB200 airplanes, serial numbers 1 through 1701; 1707 to 1750; 1758 to 1763; 1767, 1768, and 1769, 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 (e) 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 in the body of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent failure of the upper seat belt attachment caused by excessive loads on the upper attachment of the belt, which could result in bodily injury to the occupants during landing, accomplish the following:

(a) Within the next 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, inspect the bolts and spacers of the upper attachments of the front belts for cracks, dents, etc. (damage), in accordance with the ACCOMPLISHMENT INSTRUCTIONS section of one of the following service bulletins, as applicable:

(1) Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10-103, dated June 1996, which applies to Socata Models TB10, TB20, TB21, and TB200

airplanes, and Model TB9 airplanes equipped with upholstery on the upper duct posts.

(2) Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10-104, dated June 1996, which applies to Socata Model TB9 airplanes not equipped with upholstery on the upper duct posts.

(b) Prior to further flight, replace any damaged bolts or spacers found during the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD.

(c) Within the next 50 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD, incorporate either front belts upper attachment reinforcement kit No. OPT10 921000 or OPT10 920900 and recondition the belts in accordance with the ACCOMPLISHMENT INSTRUCTIONS section of the applicable service bulletin referenced in paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD.

(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) 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.

(f) All persons affected by this directive may obtain copies of the documents referred to herein upon request to SOCATA—Groupe AEROSPATIALE, Socata Product Support, Aeroport Tarbes-Ossun-Lourdes, B P 930, 65009 Tarbes Cedex, France; or Perry Airport, 7501 Pembroke Road, Pembroke Pines, Florida 33023. These documents may also be examined at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in French AD 96-142(A) and French AD 96-143(A), both dated July 17, 1996.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 31, 1997.

James E. Jackson,

Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 97-29422 Filed 11-6-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-236-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 inspections to detect discrepancies of the support straps of the flaps and adjacent areas, and corrective action, if necessary; it would also require replacement of the support straps with new straps made of steel. This proposal is prompted by the issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent fatigue cracking of the support straps of the flaps, which could result in further damage to the flap structure, and consequently lead to reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by December 8, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-236-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: 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 97-NM-236-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. 97-NM-236-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 received a report indicating that, during a scheduled inspection, fatigue cracks were found in flap support straps. Such fatigue cracking, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could result in damage to the flap structure, and consequently lead to reduced controllability of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Saab has issued Service Bulletin 340-57-033, dated May 29, 1997, Revision 1, dated August 18, 1997, which describes procedures for visual and detailed

inspections to detect discrepancies of the flap support straps and adjacent areas, and corrective action, if necessary. The service bulletin also describes procedures for replacement of the support straps of the flaps with new straps made of steel. 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 SAD No. 1-117, dated June 9, 1997, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in Sweden.

FAA's Conclusions

These airplane models are manufactured in Sweden and are 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 accomplishment of the actions specified in Revision 1 of the service bulletin described previously, except as specified below.

Differences Between the Proposed AD and the Related Service Information

This proposed AD would differ from Saab Service Bulletin 340-57-033, Revision 1, dated August 18, 1997, in that the service bulletin recommends that any crack detected during an inspection be repaired in accordance with instructions that would be provided by the manufacturer. However, the FAA has determined that the repair of any crack would be required to be accomplished in accordance with a method approved by the FAA.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 252 Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

It would take approximately 30 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed visual inspection, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the visual inspection proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be a total of \$1,800 per airplane.

It would take approximately 180 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed detailed visual inspection and concurrent replacement, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$4,580 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the detailed visual inspection and replacement proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$3,875,760, or \$15,380 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are 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 97–NM–236–AD.

Applicability: Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B series airplanes, as listed in Saab Service Bulletin 340–57–033, Revision 1, dated August 18, 1997; 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 (d) 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 fatigue cracking of the flap support straps, which could result in further damage to the flap structure and reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Except as provided by paragraph (b) of this AD: Prior to the accumulation of 16,000 total flight cycles, or within 1,500 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform a visual inspection to detect discrepancies (i.e., cracking and/or damage) of the support straps of the left- and right-hand flaps and adjacent areas, in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 340–57–033, Revision 1, dated August 18, 1997. If any discrepancy is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

(b) At the next scheduled structural inspection of the flaps, but not later than the accumulation of 3,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, accomplish paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this AD, in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 340–57–033, Revision 1, dated August 18, 1997. Accomplishment of the inspection and replacement specified in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this AD constitutes terminating action for the requirements of paragraph (a) of this AD.

(1) Perform a detailed inspection to detect discrepancies (i.e., cracking and/or damage) of the support straps of the left- and right-

hand flaps and adjacent areas, in accordance with the service bulletin. If any discrepancy is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116. And,

(2) Replace the support straps of the left- and right-hand flaps with new straps made of steel, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(c) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install a flap assembly having part number 7257800–501 through –508 inclusive, –571, –572, or –851 through –858 inclusive, on any airplane, unless that flap assembly has been modified in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 340–57–033, Revision 1, dated August 18, 1997.

(d) 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.

(e) 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 Swedish airworthiness directive SAD No. 1–117, dated June 9, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on October 31, 1997.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 97–29421 Filed 11–6–97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–179–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320 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 series

airplanes. This proposal would require replacement of a capacitor of the main landing gear (MLG) circuitry with a new electrolytic capacitor having a tantalum casing. This proposal is prompted by the issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent the failure of the landing gear to retract properly as a result of failure of a capacitor in the MLG circuitry and subsequent power interruption.

DATES: Comments must be received by December 8, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–179–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: 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