

To prevent a high pressure fuel leak, which could result in an engine nacelle fire and damage to the aircraft, accomplish the following:

(a) For R-R Viper Mk. 521, and 522 series engines, perform a one-time inspection of the barometric flow control unit (BFCU) augmentor and bypass valve joint washer for joint washer integrity, and replace, if necessary, with serviceable parts, in accordance with R-R Service Bulletins (SBs) Nos. 73-A120 and 73-A121, as applicable, dated November 1997, as follows:

(1) For engines with less than 200 hours time in service (TIS) since new, overhaul, or repair of the BFCU, inspect within 2 months, or 100 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first.

(2) For engines with 200 or more hours TIS since new, overhaul, or repair of the BFCU, inspect at the next engine removal after the effective date of this AD.

(b) For R-R Viper Mk. 526 series engines, perform a one-time inspection of the barometric flow control unit (BFCU) augmentor and bypass valve joint washer for joint washer integrity, and replace, if necessary, with serviceable parts, in accordance with R-R Service Bulletins (SBs) Nos. 73-A68 and 73-A69, as applicable, dated November 1997, as follows:

(1) For engines with less than 200 hours time in service (TIS) since new, overhaul, or repair of the BFCU, inspect within 2 months, or 100 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first.

(2) For engines with 200 or more hours TIS since new, overhaul, or repair of the BFCU, inspect at the next engine removal after the effective date of this AD.

(c) For R-R Viper Mk. 601 series engines, perform a one-time inspection of the BFCU augmentor and bypass valve joint washer for joint washer integrity, and replace, if necessary, with serviceable parts, in accordance with R-R SBs Nos. 73-A35 and 73-A36, as applicable, dated November 1997, as follows:

(1) For engines with less than 200 hours TIS since new, overhaul, or repair of the BFCU, inspect within 2 months, or 100 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first.

(2) For engines with 200 or more hours TIS since new, overhaul, or repair of the BFCU, inspect at the next engine removal after the effective date of this AD.

(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, Engine Certification Office. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Engine Certification Office.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this airworthiness directive, if any, may be obtained from the Engine Certification Office.

(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 aircraft to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Burlington, Massachusetts, on April 23, 1998.

Jay J. Pardee,

Manager, Engine and Propeller Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-11436 Filed 4-29-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-310-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A310 and A300-600 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the superseding of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A310 and A300-600 series airplanes, that currently requires, among other things, repetitive inspections to ensure correct synchronization of the hydraulic control valves of the trimmable horizontal stabilizer (THS) actuator; replacement of the horizontal stabilizer actuator motors with new or serviceable motors and resynchronization of the valves, or adjustment of the synchronization, if necessary; and a functional test of the THS. This proposed AD would add a requirement to replace the hydraulic motor of the THS with an improved motor, which would constitute terminating action for the repetitive inspections. This proposal also would expand the applicability to include additional airplanes. 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 desynchronization of the hydraulic control valves, which could result in runaway of the horizontal stabilizer to its full up or down position, subsequent reduced maneuvering capability, and potential pitch upset.

DATES: Comments must be received by June 1, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-310-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 97-NM-310-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. 97-NM-310-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

On January 12, 1996, the FAA issued AD 96-01-52, amendment 39-9491 (61

FR 2697, January 29, 1996), applicable to certain Airbus Model A310 and A300-600 series airplanes. That AD requires, among other things, repetitive inspections to ensure correct synchronization of the hydraulic control valves of the trimmable horizontal stabilizer (THS) actuator; replacement of the horizontal stabilizer actuator motors with new or serviceable motors and resynchronization of the valves, or adjustment of the synchronization, if necessary; and a functional test of the THS. That action was prompted by a report of desynchronization of the hydraulic control valves that direct fluid to the horizontal stabilizer actuator motors, which resulted in uncommanded movement of the THS. The actions specified by that AD are intended to prevent such desynchronization, which could lead to runaway of the horizontal stabilizer to its full up or down position, subsequent reduced maneuvering capability, and potential pitch upset.

Actions Since Issuance of Previous Rule

In the preamble to AD 96-01-52, the FAA specified that the actions required by that AD were considered "interim action." The FAA indicated that it might consider further rulemaking action once a final action was identified. The manufacturer now has developed a modification of the hydraulic motor of the THS that includes an improved camplate retention device and pin. The FAA has determined that further rulemaking action is indeed necessary in order to address the unsafe condition and ensure the continued safe operation of the affected airplanes; this proposed AD follows from that determination.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletins A310-27-2081 (for Model A310 series airplanes) and A300-27-6035 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes), both dated November 26, 1996. These service bulletins describe procedures for the installation of a modified hydraulic motor that includes an improved camplate retention device and pin. The effectivity of these service bulletins includes the airplanes affected by the service bulletins that are required by the existing AD, and includes additional airplanes. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletins is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, classified these service bulletins as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive

97-081-217(B), dated March 12, 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 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 supersede AD 96-01-52 to continue to require, among other things, repetitive inspections to ensure correct synchronization of the hydraulic control valves of the THS actuator; replacement of the motors of the horizontal stabilizer actuator with new or serviceable motors and resynchronization of the valves, or adjustment of the synchronization, if necessary; and a functional test of the THS. This proposed AD would add a requirement to replace the THS actuator hydraulic motor with an improved motor. Accomplishment of this replacement would constitute terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements. This proposed AD also would expand the applicability of the existing AD to include additional airplanes. The replacement of the motor with an improved motor would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletins described previously.

Difference Between the Proposed Rule and the French AD

Operators should note that, although the parallel French airworthiness directive recommends accomplishing the modification by August 31, 1998 (providing a compliance time of approximately 17 months), the FAA has determined that a 17-month compliance time would not address the identified unsafe condition in a timely manner. In developing an appropriate compliance time for this AD, the FAA considered

not only the recommendations by the DGAC, but the degree of urgency associated with addressing the subject unsafe condition, the average utilization of the affected fleet, and the time necessary to accomplish the modification. In light of all of these factors, the FAA finds a 12-month compliance time for accomplishment of the modification to be warranted.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 88 airplanes of U.S. registry that would be affected by this proposed AD.

The inspection currently required by AD 96-01-52, and retained in this proposed AD, takes approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the requirements of the existing AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$5,280, or \$60 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The new actions that are proposed in this AD action would take approximately 4 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the new actions proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$21,120, or \$240 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the current or 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 removing amendment 39-9491 (61 FR 2697, January 29, 1996), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), to read as follows:

Airbus: Docket 97-NM-310-AD. Supersedes AD 96-01-52, Amendment 39-9491.

Applicability: Model A310 and A300-600 series airplanes on which Airbus Modification 11607 has not been installed, 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 (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, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent desynchronization of the hydraulic control valves, which could result in runaway of the horizontal stabilizer to its full up or down position, subsequent reduced maneuvering capability, and potential pitch upset, accomplish the following:

RESTATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS OF AD 96-01-52:

(a) Within 12 days after February 5, 1996 (the effective date of AD 96-01-52,

amendment 39-9491), perform an inspection to ensure correct synchronization of the hydraulic control valves of the trimmable horizontal stabilizer (THS) actuator, in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.1 of Airbus All Operators Telex (AOT) 27-21, Revision 1, dated January 5, 1996.

(1) If the actuator is synchronized correctly, prior to further flight, perform a functional test of the THS in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.1 of the AOT. Thereafter, repeat the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 500 hours time-in-service.

(2) If the actuator is desynchronized slightly, as specified in the AOT, prior to further flight, adjust the synchronization, and perform a functional test of the THS, in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.2 of the AOT. Thereafter, repeat the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 500 hours time-in-service.

(3) If the actuator is desynchronized significantly, as specified in the AOT, prior to further flight, accomplish either paragraph (a)(3)(i) or (a)(3)(ii) of this AD. Prior to further flight following the accomplishment of either of those paragraphs, adjust the synchronization, and perform a functional test of the THS, in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.3 of the AOT. Thereafter, repeat the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 500 hours time-in-service.

(i) Remove and replace the hydraulic motors of the horizontal stabilizer actuator (HSA) with new or serviceable motors in accordance with procedures specified in the Airplane Maintenance Manual. Or

(ii) Remove the hydraulic motors of the HSA and perform the various follow-on actions specified in paragraph 4.2.2.4 of the AOT, in accordance with that paragraph. (The follow-on actions include checking the motors and the cam seats, assembling the motors, and metal stamping the modification plate of the motors.) If any discrepancy is found during the check, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.4 of the AOT.

(b) For airplanes on which any maintenance action relating to a hydraulic motor or a hydraulic valve block of the HSA has occurred since the airplane was new: Within 12 days after February 5, 1996, accomplish either paragraph (b)(1) or (b)(2) of this AD.

(1) Replace both hydraulic motors of the HSA with new or serviceable motors in accordance with the procedures specified in the Airplane Maintenance Manual. Adjust the synchronization, and perform a functional test of the THS in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.3 of Airbus AOT 27-21, Revision 1, dated January 5, 1996. Thereafter, perform the repetitive inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 500 hours time-in-service. Or

(2) Remove the hydraulic motors of the HSA and perform the various follow-on actions specified in paragraph 4.2.2.4 of the AOT, in accordance with that paragraph of

the AOT. Adjust the synchronization, and perform a functional test of the THS in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.3 of the AOT. (The follow-on actions include checking the motors and the cam seats, assembling the motors, and metal stamping the modification plate of the motors.) If any discrepancy is found during the check, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with paragraph 4.2.2.4 of the AOT. Thereafter, perform the repetitive inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 500 hours time-in-service.

NEW REQUIREMENTS OF THIS AD:

(c) Within 1 year after the effective date of this AD, replace the hydraulic motors of the THS actuator with improved motors, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A310-27-2081 (for Model A310 series airplanes) or A300-27-6035 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes), both dated November 26, 1996, as applicable.

Accomplishment of this action constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of this AD.

(d) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install on any airplane a THS actuator having part number 47142-201/-203.

(e)(1) 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.

(e)(2) Alternative methods of compliance, approved previously in accordance with AD 96-01-52, amendment 39-9491, are approved as alternative methods of compliance with paragraphs (a) and (b) of this AD.

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.

(f) 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 97-081-217(B), dated March 12, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 23, 1998.

Gary L. Killion,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 98-11435 Filed 4-29-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U