

## 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 98–NM–61–AD.

**Applicability:** Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes; on which Airbus Modification 26065 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A320–24–1092, Revision 01, dated December 24, 1997) has not been accomplished; 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 a simultaneous cutoff of the fuel supply to both engines, which could result in a loss of engine power and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 18 months after the effective date of this AD, relocate the engine/master 1 relay (11QG) from relay box 103VU to shelf 95VU in the avionics bay, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320–24–1092, dated March 26, 1997, or Revision 01, dated December 24, 1997.

(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.

(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 97–360–111(B), dated November 19, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 5, 1998.

**D. L. Riggins,**

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

[FR Doc. 98–12515 Filed 5–11–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–NM–82–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300–600 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 all Airbus Model A300–600 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections to detect fatigue cracking of the wing top skin at the front spar joint; and a follow-on eddy current inspection and repair, if necessary. 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 detect and correct fatigue cracking of the wing top skin at the front spar joint, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by June 11, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–NM–82–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 98–NM–82–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. 98–NM–82–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

##### Discussion

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Airbus Model A300–600 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that, during full-scale testing on a Model A300–600 test article, fatigue cracks were found between 38,000 and 49,000 simulated flights on the wing top skin at the front spar joint between ribs 1 and 7. Further investigation has revealed that the fatigue cracks originated in the holes of the clearance fit fasteners on the wing top skin. Such fatigue cracking, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could

result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

#### Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A300-57-6045, Revision 1, dated August 3, 1994 (including Appendix 1, Revision 1, dated August 3, 1994), which describes procedures for repetitive detailed visual inspections to detect fatigue cracking of the wing top skin at the front spar joint; a follow-on eddy current inspection to confirm the findings of the visual inspection if cracking is suspected or detected; and repair of certain cracking. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 97-374-238(B), dated December 3, 1997, 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 accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

#### Differences Between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletin

Operators should note that, unlike the procedures described in the service bulletin, this proposed AD would not permit further flight if cracks are detected in the wing top skin. The FAA has determined that, because of the safety implications and consequences associated with such cracking, any subject wing top skin that is found to be

cracked must be repaired or modified prior to further flight.

Operators also should note that, although the service bulletin specifies that the manufacturer may be contacted for disposition of certain repair conditions, this proposal would require the repair of those conditions to be accomplished in accordance with a method approved by either the FAA, or the DGAC (or its delegated agent). In light of the type of repair that would be required to address the identified unsafe condition, and in consonance with existing bilateral airworthiness agreements, the FAA has determined that, for this proposed AD, a repair approved by either the FAA or the DGAC would be acceptable for compliance with this proposed AD.

#### Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 54 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD. It would take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$6,480, or \$120 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

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:

**Airbus Industrie:** Docket 98-NM-82-AD.

**Applicability:** All Model A300-600 series airplanes, 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 (c) 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 detect and correct fatigue cracking of the wing top skin at the front spar joint, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 22,000 total flight cycles, or within 2,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform a detailed visual inspection to detect fatigue cracking of the wing top skin at the front spar joint, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6045, Revision 1, dated August 3, 1994 (including Appendix 1, Revision 1, dated August 3, 1994). Repeat the detailed visual inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 8,000 flight cycles.

(b) If any cracking is suspected or detected during any inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, prior to further flight, perform an eddy current inspection to confirm the findings of the visual inspection, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6045, Revision 1, dated August 3,

1994 (including Appendix 1, Revision 1, dated August 3, 1994). If any cracking is detected during any eddy current inspection, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, or the Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile or (its delegated agent).

(c) 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. 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.

(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.

**Note 3:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 97-374-238(B), dated December 3, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 5, 1998.

**John J. Hickey,**

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

[FR Doc. 98-12514 Filed 5-11-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-93-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 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 all Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections for discrepancies of the lock bolt for the pintle pin on the main landing gear (MLG), and follow-on corrective actions, if necessary. 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 detect and correct a rotated, damaged, or missing lock bolt, which could result in disengagement of the pintle pin from the bearing, and consequent collapse of the MLG during landing.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by June 11, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-93-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 98-NM-93-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. 98-NM-93-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

#### Discussion

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that it has received two reports indicating that the forward pintle pin of the main landing gear (MLG) had migrated forward toward the wing rear spar. In both instances, the lock bolt and associated MLG barrel bushings securing the pintle pin were missing, which allowed the pintle pin to migrate forward, although further movement was prevented by the incrementally tapered diameter of the pintle pin. Initial investigations have indicated that the probable cause of migration of the pintle pin was due to ineffective lubrication of the bearing of the forward pintle pin, which caused excess load on the lock bolt. The DGAC further advises that backward migration of the pintle pin also could occur, which would allow the pintle pin to become disengaged and separate from the pintle pin bearing. Such discrepancies of the pintle pin, if not corrected, could result in collapse of the MLG during landing.

#### Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The manufacturer has issued Airbus All Operator Telex (AOT) 32-17, Revision 01, dated November 6, 1997, which describes procedures for repetitive detailed visual inspections for discrepancies (rotation, wear, missing or broken parts) of the lock bolt for the pintle pin of the MLG, and follow-on corrective actions, if necessary. The corrective actions include replacement of a discrepant lock bolt with a new or serviceable part, followed by relubrication of the pintle spherical bearing. The DGAC classified this AOT as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 97-385-112(B), dated December 17, 1997, in order to assure the airworthiness of these airplanes in France.