

Electronic and Avionics Systems Service Bulletin M-4431 (RIA-35B-34-7), dated April 1998; is considered acceptable for compliance with the modification specified in this amendment.

(c) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install on any airplane an AlliedSignal RIA-35B ILS receiver, P/N 066-50006-0202, that has been found to be discrepant [that is, an ILS receiver for which one of the caution messages specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this AD was displayed on the ECAM] unless the discrepancy has been corrected by modifying the ILS receiver in accordance with AlliedSignal Electronic and Avionics Systems Service Bulletin M-4431 (RIA-35B-34-7), Revision 1, dated May 1998.

(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 Operations Inspector or Principal Avionics Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116.

Note 4: 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.

(f) This amendment becomes effective on August 28, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 6, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 98-21656 Filed 8-12-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-128-AD; Amendment 39-10711; AD 98-17-09]

RIN 2120-AA64

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

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment supersedes an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to all Airbus Model A310 and A300-600 series airplanes, that

currently requires a revision of the Airplane Flight Manual that warns the flightcrew of certain consequences associated with overriding the autopilot when it is in the pitch control axis. That AD also requires modification of certain flight control computers, and a modification to the autopilot. For certain airplanes, that AD also requires repetitive operational testing of the modified autopilot to determine if the disconnect function operates properly, and repair, if necessary. This amendment adds a new requirement to accomplish those repetitive operational tests on other airplanes. This amendment is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent an out-of-trim condition between the trimmable horizontal stabilizer and the elevator, which could result in severely reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: Effective September 17, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications, as listed in the regulations, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of May 23, 1996 (61 FR 16873, April 18, 1996).

The incorporation by reference of certain other publications, as listed in the regulations, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of October 3, 1997 (62 FR 45710, August 29, 1997).

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

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: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) by superseding AD 97-18-09, amendment 39-10119 (62 FR 45710, August 29, 1997), which is applicable to all Airbus Model A310 and A300-600 series airplanes, was published in the **Federal Register** on June 3, 1998 (63 FR 30150). The action proposed to

supersede AD 97-18-09 to continue to require a revision of the Airplane Flight Manual that warns the flightcrew of certain consequences associated with overriding the autopilot when it is in the pitch control axis. It also proposed to continue to require modification of certain flight control computers, and a modification to the autopilot. For certain airplanes, that AD also proposed to continue to require repetitive operational testing of the modified autopilot to determine if the disconnect function operates properly, and repair, if necessary. The action also proposed to add a new requirement to accomplish those repetitive operational tests on other airplanes.

Comments

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the single comment received.

The commenter supports the proposed rule.

Conclusion

After careful review of the available data, including the comment noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 94 airplanes of U.S. registry that will be affected by this AD.

The AFM revision that was required previously by AD 96-08-07, amendment 39-9573, and is retained in this 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 currently required AFM revision on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$5,640, or \$60 per airplane.

The modification of certain FCC's that was required previously by AD 94-21-07, amendment 39-9049, and is retained in this AD, takes approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts will be supplied by the manufacturer at no cost to operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the currently required modification of FCC's on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$5,640, or \$60 per airplane.

The modification of the autopilot that is currently required by AD 97-18-09, and retained in this AD, takes approximately 25 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts cost approximately \$1,578 per airplane. Based on these

figures, the cost impact of the currently required modification of the autopilot on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$289,332, or \$3,078 per airplane.

The operational test that is currently required by AD 97-18-09, and retained in this AD, takes approximately 7 work hours per airplane, per test cycle, to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the currently required operational test requirement on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$39,480, or \$420 per airplane, per test cycle.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the 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 adopted herein will 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 final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) 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 final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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 39-10119 (62 FR 45710, August 29, 1997), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), amendment 39-10711, to read as follows:

98-17-09 Airbus Industrie: Amendment 39-10711. Docket 98-NM-128-AD.

Supersedes AD 97-18-09, Amendment 39-10119.

Applicability: All Model A310 and 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 (f) 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 out-of-trim condition between the trimmable horizontal stabilizer and the elevator, which could result in severely reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Restatement of Actions required by AD 96-08-07, Amendment 39-9573:

(a) Within 10 days after May 23, 1996 (the effective date of AD 96-08-07, amendment 39-9573), revise the Limitations Section of the FAA-approved Airplane Flight Manual (AFM) to include the information contained in paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD, as applicable. This may be accomplished by inserting a copy of this AD in the AFM. The AFM limitation required by AD 94-21-07, amendment 39-9049, may be removed following accomplishment of the requirements of this paragraph.

(1) For airplanes on which the flight control computers (FCC) have not been modified in accordance with the requirements of paragraph (b) of this AD:

"Overriding the autopilot (AP) in pitch axis does not cancel the AP autotrim when LAND TRACK mode [green LAND on both Flight Mode Annunciators (FMA)] or GO-AROUND mode is engaged. In these modes, if the pilot counteracts the AP, the autotrim will trim against pilot input. This could lead to a severe out-of-trim situation in a critical phase of flight."

(2) For airplanes on which the FCC's have been modified in accordance with the requirements of paragraph (b) of this AD: "Overriding the autopilot (AP) in pitch axis does not cancel the AP autotrim when LAND TRACK mode (green LAND on both FMA's) is engaged, or GO-AROUND mode is engaged below 400 feet radio altitude (RA). In these modes, if the pilot counteracts the AP, the autotrim will trim against pilot input. This could lead to a severe out-of-trim situation in a critical phase of flight."

Restatement of Actions Required by AD 94-21-07, Amendment 39-9049:

(b) For airplanes equipped with FCC's having either part number (P/N) B470ABM1 (for Model A310 series airplanes) or B470AAM1 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes): Within 60 days after November 2, 1994 (the effective date of AD 94-21-07, amendment 39-9049), modify the FCC's in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A310-22-2036, dated December 14, 1993 (for Model A310 series airplanes), or Airbus Service Bulletin A300-22-6021, Revision 1, dated December 24, 1993 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes), as applicable.

(c) As of November 2, 1994, no person shall install a FCC having either P/N B470ABM1 or B470AAM1 on any airplane.

Restatement of Actions Required by AD 97-18-09, Amendment 39-10119:

(d) For airplanes on which Modification No. 11454 [reference Airbus Service Bulletin A310-22-2044, Revision 1 (for Model A310 series airplanes), or Airbus Service Bulletin A300-22-6032, Revision 1 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes)] has not been installed: Accomplish paragraphs (d)(1), (d)(2)(i), and (d)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(1) Within 24 months after October 3, 1997 (the effective date of AD 97-18-09, amendment 39-10119), modify the autopilot in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A310-22-2044, Revision 1, dated January 8, 1997 (for Model A310 series airplanes), or Service Bulletin A300-22-6032, Revision 1, dated January 8, 1997 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes), as applicable. The requirements of paragraph (a) of AD 95-25-09, amendment 39-9455, if applicable, must be accomplished prior to or at the same time the requirements of this paragraph are accomplished.

(2) Prior to further flight following accomplishment of paragraph (d)(1) of this AD:

(i) Remove the AFM revisions required by paragraph (a) of this AD; and

(ii) Perform an operational test of this autopilot disconnect feature to determine that it operates properly, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A310-22-2047, dated July 16, 1996 (for Model A310 series airplanes), or Service Bulletin A300-22-6035, dated July 16, 1996 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes), as applicable. If any discrepancy is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with the applicable service bulletin. Repeat this test thereafter at intervals not to exceed 18 months.

New Actions Required by This AD

(e) For airplanes on which Modification No. 11454 was installed during production: Within 18 months after the date of manufacture of the airplane, or within 6 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, accomplish the actions specified in paragraph (d)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(f) 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.

(g) 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.

(h) Except as provided by paragraph (a) of this AD, the actions shall be done in accordance with the following Airbus service bulletins.

(1) The incorporation by reference of Airbus Service Bulletin A310-22-2036, dated December 14, 1993; and Airbus Service Bulletin A300-22-6021, Revision 1, dated December 24, 1993, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51, as of May 23, 1996 (61 FR 16873, April 18, 1996).

(2) The incorporation by reference of Airbus Service Bulletin A310-22-2044, Revision 1, dated January 8, 1997; Airbus Service Bulletin A300-22-6032, Revision 1, dated January 8, 1997; Airbus Service Bulletin A310-22-2047, dated July 16, 1996; and Airbus Service Bulletin A300-22-6035, dated July 16, 1996; as applicable; was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of October 3, 1997 (62 FR 45710, August 29, 1997).

(3) Copies may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 97-373-237(B), dated December 3, 1997.

(i) This amendment becomes effective on September 17, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 6, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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

[Docket No. 98-SW-25-AD; Amendment 39-10712; AD 98-12-19]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Robinson Helicopter Company (RHC) Model R44 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This document publishes in the **Federal Register** an amendment adopting Airworthiness Directive (AD) 98-12-19 which was sent previously to all known U.S. owners and operators of RHC Model R44 helicopters by individual letters. This AD requires, within 5 hours TIS, a dye penetrant inspection of each main rotor blade skin (blade skin) around both inboard trim tab alignment rivet holes. Thereafter, a repetitive visual inspection of the blade skin around both inboard trim tab alignment rivet holes is required prior to the first flight of each day or at intervals not to exceed 5 hours TIS, whichever occurs first. This amendment is prompted by an incident in which a crack in the main rotor blade resulted in a forced landing. Subsequent investigations revealed that the manufacturing process utilized to drill the trim tab alignment rivet holes in the blade skin can allow a fatigue crack to originate at these holes and propagate in the skin. This condition, if not corrected, could result in failure of the main rotor blade and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Effective August 28, 1998, to all persons except those persons to whom it was made immediately effective by priority letter AD 98-12-19, issued on June 2, 1998, which contained the requirements of this amendment.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before October 13, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-SW-25-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Fred Guerin, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, Airframe Branch, 3960 Paramount Blvd., Lakewood, California

90712, telephone (562) 627-5232, fax (562) 627-5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 2, 1998, the FAA issued priority letter AD 98-12-19, applicable to RHC Model R44 helicopters, which requires, within 5 hours TIS, a dye penetrant inspection of the blade skin around both inboard trim tab alignment rivet holes. Thereafter, a repetitive visual inspection of the blade skin around both inboard trim tab alignment rivet holes is required prior to the first flight of each day or at intervals not to exceed 5 hours TIS, whichever occurs first. If a crack is found, this AD requires replacing the main rotor blade with an airworthy main rotor blade before further flight. That action was prompted by an incident in which a pilot heard a loud noise and felt severe vibrations while hovering, resulting in a forced landing. Upon inspection, a crack was found in a main rotor blade that started at the mid-span inboard trim tab and ran chordwise to the spar where it turned along the spar for about an inch. The crack originated from a trim tab alignment rivet hole in the blade skin. Subsequent investigations revealed that the manufacturing process utilized to drill the trim tab alignment rivet holes in the blade skin can allow a fatigue crack to originate at these holes and propagate in the skin. This condition, if not corrected, could result in failure of the main rotor blade and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

Since the unsafe condition described is likely to exist or develop on other RHC Model R44 helicopters of the same type design, the FAA issued priority letter AD 98-12-19 to prevent failure of the main rotor blade and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter. The AD requires, within 5 hours TIS, a dye penetrant inspection of the blade skin around both inboard trim tab alignment rivet holes. Thereafter, a repetitive visual inspection of the blade skin around both inboard trim tab alignment rivet holes is required prior to the first flight of each day or at intervals not to exceed 5 hours TIS, whichever occurs first. If a crack is found, this AD requires replacing the main rotor blade with an airworthy main rotor blade before further flight. Installing a set of main rotor blades, P/N C016-2, constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

Since it was found that immediate corrective action was required, notice and opportunity for prior public comment thereon were impracticable and contrary to the public interest, and good cause existed to make the AD effective immediately by individual letters issued on June 2, 1998, to all