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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2009-0910; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-175-AD; Amendment 39-16046; AD 2008-09-06 R1]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems Model SAAB 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for the products listed above that would revise an existing AD. This AD results from mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) originated by an aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI describes the unsafe condition as:

Subsequent to accidents involving Fuel Tank System explosions in flight * * * and on ground, * * * Special Federal Aviation Regulation 88 (SFAR88) * * * required a safety review of the aircraft Fuel Tank System * * *.

* * * * *

Fuel Airworthiness Limitations are items arising from a systems safety analysis that have been shown to have failure mode(s) associated with an 'unsafe condition' * * *. These are identified in Failure Conditions for which an unacceptable probability of ignition risk could exist if specific tasks and/or practices are not performed in accordance with the manufacturers' requirements.

This AD requires actions that are intended to address the unsafe condition described in the MCAI.

DATES: This AD becomes effective November 23, 2009.

On June 2, 2008 (73 FR 22789, April 28, 2008), the Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD.

We must receive comments on this AD by December 21, 2009.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: (202) 493-2251.
- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-40, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this AD, contact Saab Aircraft AB, SAAB Aerosystems, SE 581 88, Linköping, Sweden; telephone +46 13 18 5591; fax +46 13 18 4874; e-mail saab2000.techsupport@saabgroup.com; Internet <http://www.saabgroup.com>.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Shahram Daneshmandi, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-1112; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

On April 15, 2008, we issued AD 2008-09-06, Amendment 39-15487 (73 FR 22789, April 28, 2008). That AD applied to all Saab Model SAAB-Fairchild SF340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B airplanes. That AD required revising the Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness to incorporate new limitations for fuel tank systems.

Critical design configuration control limitations (CDCCLs) are limitation requirements to preserve a critical ignition source prevention feature of the fuel tank system design that is necessary to prevent the occurrence of an unsafe condition. The purpose of a CDCCL is to provide instruction to retain the critical ignition source prevention feature during configuration change that may be caused by alterations, repairs, or maintenance actions. A CDCCL is not a periodic inspection.

Since we issued that AD, we have determined that it is necessary to clarify the AD's intended effect on spare and on-airplane fuel tank system components, regarding the use of maintenance manuals and instructions for continued airworthiness.

Section 91.403(c) of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 91.403(c)) specifies the following:

No person may operate an aircraft for which a manufacturer's maintenance manual or instructions for continued airworthiness has been issued that contains an airworthiness limitation section unless the mandatory * * * procedures * * * have been complied with.

Some operators have questioned whether existing components affected by the new CDCCLs must be reworked. We did not intend for the AD to retroactively require rework of components that had been maintained using acceptable methods before the effective date of the AD. Owners and operators of the affected airplanes therefore are not required to rework affected components identified as

airworthy or installed on the affected airplanes before the required revisions of the ALS. But once the CDCCLs are incorporated into the ALS, future maintenance actions on components must be done in accordance with those CDCCLs.

FAA's Determination

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. This new AD retains the requirements of the existing AD, and adds a new note to clarify the intended effect of the AD on spare and on-airplane fuel tank system components. We have renumbered subsequent notes accordingly.

Explanation of Additional Change to AD

AD 2008-09-06 allowed the use of alternative inspection, inspection intervals, or CDCCLs, if they are part of a later revision of the Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006. That provision has been removed from this AD. Allowing the use of "a later revision" of a specific service document violates Office of the Federal Register policies for approving materials that are incorporated by reference. Affected operators, however, may request approval to use an alternative inspection, inspection intervals, or CDCCLs that are part of a later revision of the referenced service document as an alternative method of compliance, under the provisions of paragraph (g)(1) of this AD.

Differences Between the AD and the MCAI or Service Information

We have reviewed the MCAI and related service information and, in general, agree with their substance. But we might have found it necessary to use different words from those in the MCAI to ensure the AD is clear for U.S. operators and is enforceable. In making these changes, we do not intend to differ substantively from the information provided in the MCAI and related service information.

We might also have required different actions in this AD from those in the MCAI in order to follow FAA policies. Any such differences are highlighted in a NOTE within the AD.

Costs of Compliance

This revision imposes no additional economic burden. The current costs for this AD are repeated for the convenience of affected operators, as follows:

We estimate that this AD will affect about 144 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it will take about 1 work-hour per product to comply with the basic requirements of this AD. The average labor rate is \$80 per work-hour. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of this AD to the U.S. operators to be \$11,520, or \$80 per product.

FAA's Justification and Determination of the Effective Date

This revision merely clarifies the intended effect on spare and on-airplane fuel tank system components, and makes no substantive change to the AD's requirements. For this reason, it is found that notice and opportunity for prior public comment for this action are unnecessary, and good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

Comments Invited

This AD is a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety, and we did not precede it by notice and opportunity for public comment. We invite you to send any written relevant data,

views, or arguments about this AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include "Docket No. FAA-2009-0910; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-175-AD" at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this AD.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this AD:

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. 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. We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by removing amendment 39-15487 (73 FR 22789, April 28, 2008) and adding the following new AD:



2008-09-06 R1 Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems: Amendment 39-16046. Docket No. FAA-2009-0910; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-175-AD.

Effective Date

- (a) This airworthiness directive (AD) becomes effective November 23, 2009.

Affected ADs

- (b) This AD revises AD 2008-09-06.

Applicability

- (c) This AD applies to all Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems Model SAAB 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B airplanes, certificated in any category, all serial numbers.

Note 1: This AD requires revisions to certain operator maintenance documents to include new inspections. Compliance with these inspections is required by 14 CFR 91.403(c). For airplanes that have been previously modified, altered, or repaired in the areas addressed by these inspections, the operator may not be able to accomplish the inspections described in the revisions. In this situation, to comply with 14 CFR 91.403(c), the operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance according to paragraph (g)(1) of this AD. The request should include a description of changes to the required inspections that will ensure the continued operational safety of the airplane.

Subject

- (d) Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 28: Fuel.

Reason

- (e) The mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) states:

"Subsequent to accidents involving Fuel Tank System explosions in flight * * * and on ground, the FAA published Special Federal Aviation Regulation 88 (SFAR 88) in June 2001. SFAR 88 required a safety review of the aircraft Fuel Tank System to determine that the design meets the requirements of FAR (Federal Aviation Regulation) § 25.901 and § 25.981(a) and (b).

"A similar regulation has been recommended by the JAA (Joint Aviation Authorities) to the European National Aviation Authorities in JAA letter 04/00/02/07/03-L024 of 3 February 2003. The review was requested to be mandated by NAA's (National Aviation Authorities) using JAR (Joint Aviation Regulation) § 25.901(c), § 25.1309.

"In August 2005 EASA published a policy statement on the process for developing instructions for maintenance and inspection of Fuel Tank System ignition source

prevention (EASA D 2005/CPRO, http://www.easa.eu.int/home/cert_policy_statements_en.html) that also included the EASA expectations with regard to compliance times of the corrective actions on the unsafe and the not unsafe part of the harmonised design review results. On a global scale the TC (type certificate) holders committed themselves to the EASA published compliance dates (see EASA policy statement). The EASA policy statement has been revised in March 2006: the date of 31-12-2005 for the unsafe related actions has now been set at 01-07-2006.

"Fuel Airworthiness Limitations are items arising from a systems safety analysis that have been shown to have failure mode(s) associated with an 'unsafe condition' as defined in FAA's memo 2003-112-15 'SFAR 88—Mandatory Action Decision Criteria'. These are identified in Failure Conditions for which an unacceptable probability of ignition risk could exist if specific tasks and/or practices are not performed in accordance with the manufacturers' requirements.

"This EASA Airworthiness Directive mandates the Fuel System Airworthiness Limitations (comprising maintenance/inspection tasks and Critical Design Configuration Control Limitations (CDCCL)) for the type of aircraft, that resulted from the design reviews and the JAA recommendation and EASA policy statement mentioned above."

The corrective action is revising the Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness to incorporate new limitations for fuel tank systems.

Restatement of AD 2008-09-06, With Revised Compliance Method

Actions and Compliance

(f) Unless already done, do the following actions.

(1) Within 3 months after June 2, 2008 (the effective date of AD 2008-09-06), revise the ALS of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness to incorporate the maintenance and inspection instructions in Part 1 of Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006. For all tasks identified in Part 1 of Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006, the initial compliance times start from June 2, 2008, and the repetitive inspections must be accomplished thereafter at the interval specified in Part 1 of Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006; except as provided by paragraphs (f)(3) and (g) of this AD.

(2) Before December 16, 2008, revise the ALS of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness to incorporate the CDCCLs as defined in Part 2 of Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006.

(3) After accomplishing the actions specified in paragraphs (f)(1) and (f)(2) of this AD, no alternative inspection, inspection intervals, or CDCCLs may be used unless the inspections, intervals, or CDCCLs are approved as an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (g)(1) of this AD.

(4) Where Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006, allows for exceptional short-term extensions, an exception is acceptable to the FAA if it is approved by the appropriate principal inspector in the FAA Flight Standards Certificate Holding District Office.

New Information

Explanation of CDCCL Requirements

Note 2: Notwithstanding any other maintenance or operational requirements, components that have been identified as airworthy or installed on the affected airplanes before the revision of the ALS, as required by paragraphs (f)(1) and (f)(2) of this AD, do not need to be reworked in accordance with the CDCCLs. However, once the ALS has been revised, future maintenance actions on these components must be done in accordance with the CDCCLs.

FAA AD Differences

Note 3: This AD differs from the MCAI and/or service information as follows: No differences.

Other FAA AD Provisions

(g) The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. Send information to ATTN: Shahram Daneshmandi, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-1112; fax (425) 227-1149. Before using any approved AMOC on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify your principal maintenance inspector (PMI) or principal avionics inspector (PAI), as appropriate, or lacking a principal inspector, your local Flight Standards District Office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) Airworthy Product: For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

(3) Reporting Requirements: For any reporting requirement in this AD, under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements and has assigned OMB Control Number 2120-0056.

Related Information

(h) Refer to MCAI EASA Airworthiness Directive 2006-0221, dated July 20, 2006; and Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006; for related information.

Material Incorporated by Reference

(i) You must use Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006, to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(1) The Director of the Federal Register previously approved the incorporation by reference of Saab 340 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations Document 340 LKS 009033, dated February 14, 2006, on June 2, 2008 (73 FR 22789, April 28, 2008).

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Saab Aircraft AB, SAAB Aerosystems, SE 581 88, Linköping, Sweden; telephone +46 13 18 5591; fax +46 13 18 4874; e-mail saab2000.techsupport@saabgroup.com; Internet <http://www.saabgroup.com>.

(3) You may review copies of the service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221 or 425-227-1152.

(4) You may also review copies of the service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on October 26, 2009.

Stephen P. Boyd,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.