

[Federal Register Volume 80, Number 161 (Thursday, August 20, 2015)]

[Rules and Regulations]

[Pages 50551-50553]

From the Federal Register Online via the Government Publishing Office [www.gpo.gov]

[FR Doc No: 2015-20383]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2014-1051; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-171-AD; Amendment 39-18239; AD 2015-17-06]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes

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

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by reports that on airplanes equipped with sharklets, discrettes (used to activate the load alleviation function) are connected on various flight computers using the same ground point. In these cases, the ground point segregation is no longer effective, and a single failure could lead to loss of sharklet identification by flight computers causing a return to the wing tip fence (no sharklet configuration) performance. This AD requires modification of the sharklet ground connection. We are issuing this AD to prevent loss of sharklet identification by the flight computers and subsequent reduced control of the airplane.

DATES: This AD becomes effective September 24, 2015.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of September 24, 2015.

ADDRESSES: You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=FAA-2014-1051> or in person at the Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC.

For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus, Airworthiness Office–EIAS, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email account.airworth_eas@airbus.com; Internet <http://www.airbus.com>. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221. It is also available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2014-1051.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-1405; fax 425-227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on January 23, 2015 (80 FR 3520). The NPRM was prompted by reports that on airplanes equipped with sharklets, discrettes (used to activate the load alleviation function) are connected on various flight computers using the same ground point. In these cases, the ground point segregation is no longer effective and a single failure could lead to loss of sharklet identification by flight computers causing a return to the wing tip fence (no sharklet configuration) performance. The NPRM proposed to require modification of the sharklet ground connection. We are issuing this AD to prevent loss of sharklet identification by the flight computers and subsequent reduced control of the airplane.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2014-0186, dated August 19, 2014 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or "the MCAI"), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. The MCAI states:

During A320 Neo review, Airbus design office identified that on A320 family aeroplanes equipped with sharklets, discrettes used to activate the load alleviation function are connected on various flight computers using the same ground point. In that case, the ground point segregation is no longer effective and a single failure could lead to loss of sharklet identification by the flight computers, inducing a return to the wing tip fence (no sharklet configuration) behaviour.

This condition, if not corrected, could lead to reduced control of the aeroplane, depending on aeroplane configuration and flight phase.

It has been determined that Airbus mod 156108 restores the correct segregation. However, since introduction of sharklet mod 160500 and mod 160023, a number of aeroplanes equipped with sharklets have been delivered without incorporating mod 156108. In addition, mod 156108 was not included in certain SBs [service bulletins] that introduce the sharklet device in service onto aeroplanes with a reinforced wing, previously operated with a wing tip fence. Airbus mod 156108 has now been introduced into Airbus SB A320-57-1186 at Rev.03 and will be introduced at next revisions of SB A320-57-1173 and SB A320-57-1187.

To address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus published SB A320-27-1240 for in-service installation of mod 156108.

For the reasons described above, this AD requires modification of the sharklet ground connection.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=FAA-2014-1051-0002>.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We received no comments on the NPRM (80 FR 3520, January 23, 2015) or on the determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this AD as proposed except for minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM (80 FR 3520, January 23, 2015) for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM (80 FR 3520, January 23, 2015).

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A320-27-1240, dated June 18, 2014. The service information describes procedures for modification of the sharklet ground connection. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section of this or AD.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 46 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We also estimate that it will take about 14 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Required parts will cost about \$347 per product. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of this AD on U.S. operators to be \$70,702, or \$1,537 per product.

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 that 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);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and
4. 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.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=FAA-2014-1051>; or in person at the Docket Management Facility 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.

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 adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):



2015-17-06 Airbus: Amendment 39-18239. Docket No. FAA-2014-1051; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-171-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD becomes effective September 24, 2015.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to the Airbus airplanes, certificated in any category, identified in paragraphs (c)(1), (c)(2), and (c)(3) of this AD, all manufacturer serial numbers on which Airbus modification (mod) 160500 or mod 160023 has been embodied in production, and those that have been modified in service through the Airbus Service Bulletin A320-57-1173, A320-57-1186, or A320-57-1187, except those on which Airbus mod 156108 has been embodied in production.

- (1) Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes.
- (2) Model A320-211, -212, -214, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes.
- (3) Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 27, Flight Controls.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by reports that on airplanes equipped with sharklets, discrettes (used to activate the load alleviation function) are connected on various flight computers using the same ground point. In these cases, the ground point segregation is no longer effective, and a single failure could lead to loss of sharklet identification by flight computers causing a return to the wing tip fence (no sharklet configuration) performance. We are issuing this AD to prevent loss of sharklet identification by the flight computers and subsequent reduced control of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Modification

Within 24 months after the effective date of this AD, modify the sharklet ground connection, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-27-1240, dated June 18, 2014.

(h) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Branch, send it to ATTN: Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-1405; fax 425-227-1149. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) Contacting the Manufacturer: For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or Airbus's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(i) Related Information

Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2014-0186, dated August 19, 2014, for related information. This MCAI may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=FAA-2014-1051-0002>.

(j) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Airbus Service Bulletin A320-27-1240, dated June 18, 2014.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus, Airworthiness Office–EIAS, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email eas@airbus.com">account.airworth-eas@airbus.com; Internet <http://www.airbus.com>.

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

(5) You may view this 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/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 10, 2015.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.