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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2005-22539; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-08-AD; Amendment 39-14300; AD 2005-20-07]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330-300 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The FAA adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Model A330-300 series airplanes. This AD requires reinforcing the structure of the center fuselage by installing external stiffeners (butt straps) at frame (FR) 53.3 on the fuselage skin between left-hand and right-hand stringer 13, and related investigative actions. This AD results from a report that, during fatigue tests of the fuselage, cracks initiated and grew at the circumferential joint of FR53.3. We are issuing this AD to prevent fatigue cracking of the fuselage, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage.

DATES: Effective October 19, 2005.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD as of October 19, 2005.

We must receive comments on this AD by December 5, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Use one of the following addresses to submit comments on this AD.

- DOT Docket web site: Go to *http://dms.dot.gov* and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- Government-wide rulemaking web site: Go to *http://www.regulations.gov* and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- Mail: Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street SW., Nassif Building, room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590.
- Fax: (202) 493-2251.
- Hand Delivery: Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Contact Airbus, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France, for service information identified in this AD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tim Backman, Aerospace Engineer, ANM-116, International Branch, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2797; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Although this is a final rule that was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, we invite you to submit any relevant written data, views, or arguments regarding this AD. Include "Docket No. FAA-2005-22539; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-08-AD" at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend the AD in light of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://dms.dot.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact with FAA personnel concerning this AD. Using the search function of that web site, anyone can find and read the comments in any of our dockets, including the name of the individual who sent the comment (or signed the comment on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review the DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the Federal Register published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477-78), or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Examining the Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>, or in person at the Docket Management Facility office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Docket Management Facility office (telephone (800) 647-5227) is located on the plaza level of the Nassif Building at the DOT street address stated in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after the Docket Management System receives them.

Discussion

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified us that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Airbus Model A330-300 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that, during fatigue tests of the fuselage, cracks initiated and grew at the circumferential joint of frame (FR) 53.3. This condition, if not corrected, could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage.

Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A330-53-3127, including Appendix 01, Revision 01, dated November 21, 2003. The service bulletin describes procedures for reinforcing the structure of the center fuselage by installing external doublers (butt straps) at FR53.3 on the fuselage skin between left- and right-hand stringer 13. The installation of the three butt straps includes removing fasteners and doing the related investigative action of rototesting the holes where the fasteners were removed. If a crack is found during a rototest, the service bulletin specifies contacting Airbus for repair instructions. If no crack is found, the installation includes counter-drilling the fastener holes in the butt straps, cold-expanding the matching holes in the fuselage, reaming and deburring the holes,

shimming, and applying sealant around the butt straps. Accomplishing the actions specified in the service information is intended to adequately address the unsafe condition. The DGAC mandated the service information and issued French airworthiness directive F-2003-415, dated November 12, 2003, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of This AD

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. We have examined the DGAC's findings, evaluated all pertinent information, and determined that we need to issue an AD for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Therefore, we are issuing this AD to prevent fatigue cracking of the fuselage, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage. This AD requires accomplishing the actions specified in the service information described previously.

Difference Between the Proposed AD and the French Airworthiness Directive

The applicability of French airworthiness directive F-2003-415, dated November 12, 2003, excludes airplanes on which Airbus Service Bulletin A330-53-3127, Revision 01, has been accomplished in service. However, we have not excluded those airplanes in the applicability of this proposed AD; rather, this proposed AD includes a requirement to accomplish the actions specified in that service bulletin. This requirement would ensure that the actions specified in the service bulletin and required by this proposed AD are accomplished on all affected airplanes. Operators must continue to operate the airplane in the configuration required by this proposed AD unless an alternative method of compliance is approved.

Costs of Compliance

None of the airplanes affected by this action are on the U.S. Register. All airplanes affected by this AD are currently operated by non-U.S. operators under foreign registry; therefore, they are not directly affected by this AD action. However, we consider this AD necessary to ensure that the unsafe condition is addressed if any affected airplane is imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future.

The following table provides the estimated costs to comply with this AD for any affected airplane that might be imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future.

ESTIMATED COSTS				
Action	Work hours	Average labor rate per hour	Parts cost	Cost per airplane
Installation	172	\$65	\$8,920	\$20,100

FAA's Determination of the Effective Date

No airplane affected by this AD is currently on the U.S. Register. Therefore, providing notice and opportunity for public comment is unnecessary before this AD is issued, and this AD may be made effective in less than 30 days after it is published in the Federal Register.

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 have 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 the 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. 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. See the ADDRESSES section for a location to examine the regulatory evaluation.

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 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE



Aircraft Certification Service
Washington, DC

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

We post ADs on the internet at www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/alerts/

The following Airworthiness Directive issued by the Federal Aviation Administration in accordance with the provisions of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 39, applies to an aircraft model of which our records indicate you may be the registered owner. Airworthiness Directives affect aviation safety and are regulations which require immediate attention. You are cautioned that no person may operate an aircraft to which an Airworthiness Directive applies, except in accordance with the requirements of the Airworthiness Directive (reference 14 CFR part 39, subpart 39.3).

2005-20-07 Airbus: Amendment 39-14300. Docket No. FAA-2005-22539; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-08-AD.

Effective Date

- (a) This AD becomes effective October 19, 2005.

Affected ADs

- (b) None.

Applicability

(c) This AD applies to Model A330-301, -321, -322, -323, -341, -342, and -343 series airplanes, certificated in any category, except those on which Airbus Modification 41652 has been accomplished in production.

Unsafe Condition

(d) This AD results from a report that, during fatigue tests of the fuselage, cracks initiated and grew at the circumferential joint of frame (FR) 53.3. We are issuing this AD to prevent fatigue cracking of the fuselage, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage.

Compliance

(e) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

Installation

(f) At the later of the times in paragraphs (f)(1) and (f)(2) of this AD: Install the butt straps at FR53.3 on the fuselage skin between left- and right-hand stringer 13, and do all related investigative and corrective actions before further flight. Except as provided by paragraph (g) of this AD, do all actions in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A330-53-3127, Revision 01, dated November 21, 2003.

(1) Before the accumulation of 14,700 total flight cycles or 51,400 total flight hours, whichever occurs earlier.

(2) Within 6 months after the effective date of this AD.

Contact the FAA/Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC) for Certain Repair Instructions

(g) If any crack is detected during the related investigative actions (rototest) required by paragraph (f) of this AD: Before further flight, repair the crack according to a method approved by either the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate; or the DGAC (or its delegated agent).

Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(h)(1) The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested in accordance with the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19.

(2) Before using any AMOC approved in accordance with § 39.19 on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify the appropriate principal inspector in the FAA Flight Standards Certificate Holding District Office.

Related Information

(i) French airworthiness directive F-2003-415, dated November 12, 2003, also addresses the subject of this AD.

Material Incorporated by Reference

(j) You must use Airbus Service Bulletin A330-53-3127, Revision 01, dated November 21, 2003, to perform the actions that are required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of this document in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Contact Airbus, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France, for a copy of this service information. You may review copies at the Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street SW., room PL-401, Nassif Building, Washington, DC; on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>; or at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at the 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 September 20, 2005.

Ali Bahrami,

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 05-19333 Filed 10-3-05; 8:45 am]

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