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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2001-NM-107-AD; Amendment 39-13451; AD 2004-03-07]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320-111, -211, -212, and -231 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A320-111, -211, -212, and -231 series airplanes. This AD requires repetitive inspections for fatigue cracking around the fasteners attaching the pressure panel to the flexible bracket at frame 36, adjacent to the longitudinal beams on the left and right sides of the airplane; and repair as necessary. This AD would also provide an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections. This action is necessary to detect and correct fatigue cracking around the fasteners attaching the pressure panel to the flexible bracket at the frame 36 adjacent to the longitudinal beams, which could result in reduced structural integrity and possible rapid decompression of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Effective March 15, 2004.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of March 15, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Airbus, 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: Tim Dulin, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2141; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Airbus Model A320-111, -211, -212, and -231 series airplanes was published in the Federal Register on November 17, 2003 (68 FR 64830). That action proposed to require repetitive inspections for fatigue cracking around the fasteners attaching the pressure panel to the flexible bracket at frame 36, adjacent to the longitudinal beams on the left and right sides of the airplane; and repair as necessary. That action also provided an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections.

Comments

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were submitted in response to the proposal or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

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

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 24 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD.

For airplanes without a center fuel tank, it will take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the detailed inspection, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the detailed inspection is estimated to be \$65 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

For airplanes with a center fuel tank, it will take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the rotating probe inspection at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection is estimated to \$130 per airplane, per inspection 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. The cost impact figures discussed in AD rulemaking actions represent only the time necessary to perform the specific actions actually required by the AD. These figures typically do not include incidental costs, such as the time required to gain access and close up, planning time, or time necessitated by other administrative actions.

Should an operator elect to perform the optional terminating action, it will take approximately 12 work hours per airplane to accomplish the cold work modification, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. The cost of required parts is \$650. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the optional terminating action is estimated to be \$1,430 per airplane.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein 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. Therefore, it is determined that this final rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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 adding the following new airworthiness directive:

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"

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).

2004-03-07 Airbus: Amendment 39-13451. Docket 2001-NM-107-AD.

Applicability: Model A320-111, -211, -212, and -231 series airplanes having manufacturer serial numbers 0002 through 0107 inclusive; certificated in any category; except those airplanes on which Airbus Modification 21202/K1432 has been incorporated in production, or Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1029, Revision 01, dated April 29, 2002, has been incorporated in service.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To detect and correct fatigue cracking around the fasteners connecting the pressure panel to the flexible bracket at frame 36, adjacent to the longitudinal beams on the left and right sides of the airplane, which could result in reduced structural integrity and possible rapid decompression of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Inspection and Follow-on Actions

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 30,000 total flight cycles, do a rotating probe inspection on airplanes with a center fuel tank, or a detailed inspection on airplanes without a center fuel tank, to detect cracking around the fasteners that attach the pressure panel to the flexible bracket at frame 36, adjacent to the longitudinal beams on the left and right sides of the airplane, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1030, Revision 01, dated May 21, 2002.

Note 1: For the purposes of this AD, a detailed inspection is defined as: "An intensive visual examination of a specific structural area, system, installation, or assembly to detect damage, failure, or irregularity. Available lighting is normally supplemented with a direct source of good lighting at intensity deemed appropriate by the inspector. Inspection aids such as mirror, magnifying lenses, etc., may be used. Surface cleaning and elaborate access procedures may be required."

(b) If no crack is detected by the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, repeat the applicable inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 6,000 flight cycles for airplanes without a center fuel tank, and at intervals not to exceed 18,000 flight cycles for airplanes with a center fuel tank.

Corrective Actions

(c) If any crack is detected during any inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, before further flight, repair the affected structure by accomplishing all applicable actions in accordance with paragraphs 3.B. through 3.E. of the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1030, Revision 01, dated May 21, 2002. Repeat the applicable inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 6,000 flight cycles for airplanes without a center fuel tank, and at intervals not to exceed 18,000 flight cycles for airplanes with a center fuel tank. For any area where cracking is repaired, the repair constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection of that area.

Note 2: Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1030 references Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1029, Revision 01, dated April 29, 2002, as an additional source of service information for certain repairs.

(d) If any service bulletin specifies to contact the manufacturer for appropriate action: Before 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).

Optional Terminating Action

(e) Modification of the structure around the fasteners that attach the pressure panel to the flexible bracket at frame 36, adjacent to the longitudinal beams on the left and right sides of the airplane, by accomplishing all applicable actions in accordance with paragraphs 3.A. through 3.E. of the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1029, Revision 01, dated April 29, 2002, constitutes terminating action for this AD.

Credit for Actions Done per Previous Issue of Service Bulletins

(f) Accomplishment of the required actions before the effective date of this AD in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1030, dated January 5, 2000; or Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1029, dated January 5, 2000; is considered acceptable for compliance with the applicable requirements of paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this AD.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(g) In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance for this AD.

Incorporation by Reference

(h) Unless otherwise specified in this AD, the actions must be done in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1030, Revision 01, excluding Appendix 01, dated May 21, 2002. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Airbus, 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 2000-531-155(B), dated December 27, 2000.

Effective Date

(i) This amendment becomes effective on March 15, 2004.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 29, 2004.
Kalene C. Yanamura,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 04-2466 Filed 2-6-04; 8:45 am]
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