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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2017-0472; Product Identifier 2016-NM-148-AD; Amendment 39-19002; AD 2017-17-12]

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 all Airbus Model A310-203, -221, -222, -304, -322, -324, and -325 airplanes. This AD was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder indicating that the wing bottom skin at the main landing gear (MLG) reinforcing plate is subject to widespread fatigue damage (WFD). This AD requires a modification of the wing bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective October 2, 2017.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of October 2, 2017.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office–EAW, 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 Standards Branch, 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-2017-0472.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2017-0472; 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 Office (telephone 800-647-5527) is 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 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-2125; 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 all Airbus Model A310-203, -221, -222, -304, -322, -324, and -325 airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on May 19, 2017 (82 FR 22904) (“the NPRM”). The NPRM was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder indicating that the wing bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate is subject to WFD. The NPRM proposed to require a modification of the wing bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate. We are issuing this AD to prevent multi-site damage in the bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2016-0170, dated August 19, 2016 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus Model A310-203, -221, -222, -304, -322, -324, and -325 airplanes. The MCAI states:

In response to the FAA Part 26 rule, wing structural items of the Airbus A310 design that are deemed potentially susceptible to Widespread Fatigue Damage (WFD) have been assessed. The bottom skin at the main landing gear (MLG) reinforcing plate has been highlighted as an area susceptible to Multi Site Damage (MSD).

This condition, if not corrected, could reduce the structural integrity of the wing.

Airbus performed a detailed widespread fatigue damage tolerance analysis of the bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate, and concluded that a modification is necessary to the fastener holes at the inboard edge of the reinforcing plate forward of the rear spar. The modification consists of inspection [related investigative actions of a check and a rotating probe inspection] and a first oversize of the critical holes on the first two rows of fasteners [and corrective actions, e.g., repair]. Airbus modification 13751 was introduced and Service Bulletin (SB) A310-57-2104 was issued to provide in-service modification instructions. The accomplishment of this modification at the specified time will recondition/renovate/extend the life of the fastener holes in the bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate and prevent the development of MSD up to the Extended Service Goal (ESG).

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires certain modifications to the wing bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate, forward of the wing rear spar [including related investigative actions of a check and a rotating probe inspection and corrective actions, e.g., repair].

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2017-0472.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We received no comments on the NPRM 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 for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A310-57-2104, dated December 15, 2015. This service information describes procedures for modification of the left-hand and right-hand wing bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate, including related investigative actions and applicable corrective actions. 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.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 8 airplanes of U.S. registry.
We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs

| Action | Labor cost | Parts cost | Cost per product | Cost on U.S. operators |
|--------------|---|------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Modification | 52 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$4,420 | \$12,000 | \$16,420 | \$131,360 |

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.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

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.

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):



2017-17-12 Airbus: Amendment 39-19002; Docket No. FAA-2017-0472; Product Identifier 2016-NM-148-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective October 2, 2017.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus Model A310-203, -221, -222, -304, -322, -324, and -325 airplanes, certificated in any category, all manufacturer serial numbers.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder indicating that the wing bottom skin at the main landing gear (MLG) reinforcing plate is subject to widespread fatigue damage. We are issuing this AD to prevent multi-site damage in the bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Modification

Within the compliance times defined in table 1 to paragraph (g) of this AD, table 2 to paragraph (g) of this AD, or table 3 to paragraph (g) of this AD, as applicable to airplane type and utilization: Do a modification of the left-hand and right-hand wing bottom skin at the MLG reinforcing plate, including all related investigative actions and applicable corrective actions, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A310-57-2104, dated December 15, 2015, except as required by paragraph (h) of this AD. Do all related investigative and applicable corrective actions before further flight. For the purpose of this AD, the term “short range” applies to airplanes with an average flight time (AFT) lower than 1.5 flight hours per flight cycle, and the term “long range” applies to airplanes with an average flight time equal to or higher than 1.5 flight hours per flight cycle. For determining the “short range” and “long range” airplanes, the AFT is the total

accumulated flight hours, counted from take-off to touch-down, divided by the total accumulated flight cycles at the effective date of this AD.

Table 1 to Paragraph (g) of This AD—Model A310-200 Series Airplanes

Compliance time (whichever occurs later, A or B)

A Before exceeding 28,800 flight cycles (FC) or 57,600 flight hours (FH), whichever occurs first since first flight of the airplane.

B Within 960 FC, or 1,920 FH, or 12 months, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD.

Table 2 to Paragraph (g) of This AD—Model A310-300 “Short-Range” Airplanes

Compliance time (whichever occurs later, A or B)

A Before exceeding 27,700 FC or 77,700 FH, whichever occurs first since first flight of the airplane.

B Within 920 FC, or 2,580 FH, or 12 months, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD.

Table 3 to Paragraph (g) of This AD—Model A310-300 “Long-Range” Airplanes

Compliance time (whichever occurs later, A or B)

A Before exceeding 20,500 FC or 102,500 FH, whichever occurs first since first flight of the airplane.

B Within 680 FC, or 3,420 FH, or 12 months, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD.

(h) Exception to Service Information Specifications

Where Airbus Service Bulletin A310-57-2104, dated December 15, 2015, specifies to contact Airbus for appropriate action, and specifies that action as “RC” (Required for Compliance): Before further flight, accomplish corrective actions in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i)(2) of this AD.

(i) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, 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 Section, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j)(2) of this AD. 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.

(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 Section, Transport Standards Branch, 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.

(3) Required for Compliance (RC): Except as required by paragraph (h) of this AD, if any service information contains procedures or tests that are identified as RC, those procedures and tests must be done to comply with this AD; any procedures or tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

(j) Related Information

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2016-0170, dated August 19, 2016, for related information. This MCAI may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2017-0472.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-2125; fax 425-227-1149.

(k) 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 A310-57-2104, dated December 15, 2015.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAW, 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>.

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 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 9, 2017.

Dionne Palermo,
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.