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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2014-0486; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-126-AD; Amendment 39-17918; AD 2014-15-16]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus 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 certain Airbus Model A319-111, -112, -115, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-214, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-211, -231, and -232 airplanes. This AD requires a detailed inspection for missing fasteners on the frame between certain stringers; for certain airplanes, a rototest inspection of the fastener holes for cracking; and corrective actions if necessary. This AD was prompted by a report that when the cabin lining was removed during a cabin conversion it was discovered that fasteners were missing on the frame. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct missing fasteners which, if not corrected, could affect the structural integrity of the airframe and could result in rapid decompression.

DATES: This AD becomes effective August 18, 2014.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in this AD as of August 18, 2014.

We must receive comments on this AD by September 15, 2014.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, 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 W12-140, 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 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.

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-2014-0486; 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: 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

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Community, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2014-0146, dated June 11, 2014 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or "the MCAI"), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus Model A319-111, -112, -115, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-214, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-211, -231, and -232 airplanes. The MCAI states:

During cabin conversion of an A320 aeroplane, after removal of the cabin lining, an area was discovered where fasteners were missing at frame (FR) 24 between stringer (STR) 17 and STR18. Investigation results revealed that the available data concerning installation on the final assembly line was insufficient to pinpoint the exact MSN [manufacturer serial number] on which the affected assemblies were installed. However, a 'group' of MSN suspected to be affected was identified. Results of the static analysis performed show that the structure is still able to sustain Limit and Ultimate loads. However, the fatigue aspects indicate that long-term effects can be expected.

This condition, if not corrected, could affect the structural integrity of the airframe.

Prompted by these findings, Airbus issued Alert Operators Transmission (AOT) A53N006-14 and Service Bulletin (SB) A320-53-1285 to provide inspection instructions.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires a one-time detailed inspection (DET) [for missing fasteners] of the aeroplane structure at FR24 and, depending on findings, [a rototest inspection of the fastener holes for cracking and] accomplishment of applicable corrective actions.

Corrective actions include repairing cracking and installing fasteners.

You may examine the MCAI on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2014-0486.

Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued the following service information. The actions described in this service information are intended to correct the unsafe condition identified in the MCAI.

- Alert Operators Transmission A53N006-14, dated May 13, 2014.
- Service Bulletin A320-53-1285, dated January 29, 2014.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of This AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are issuing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined the unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of these same type designs.

"Contacting the Manufacturer" Paragraph in This AD

Since late 2006, we have included a standard paragraph titled "Airworthy Product" in all MCAI ADs in which the FAA develops an AD based on a foreign authority's AD.

The MCAI or referenced service information in an FAA AD often directs the owner/operator to contact the manufacturer for corrective actions, such as a repair. Briefly, the Airworthy Product paragraph allowed owners/operators to use corrective actions provided by the manufacturer if those actions were FAA-approved. In addition, the paragraph stated that any actions approved by the State of Design Authority (or its delegated agent) are considered to be FAA-approved.

In an NPRM having Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-101-AD (78 FR 78285, December 26, 2013), we proposed to prevent the use of repairs that were not specifically developed to correct the unsafe condition, by requiring that the repair approval provided by the State of Design Authority or its delegated agent specifically refer to the FAA AD. This change was intended to clarify the method of compliance and to provide operators with better visibility of repairs that are specifically developed and approved to correct the unsafe condition. In addition, we proposed to change the phrase "its delegated agent" to include a design approval holder (DAH) with State of Design Authority design organization approval (DOA), as applicable, to refer to a DAH authorized to approve required repairs for the proposed AD.

One commenter to the NPRM having Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-101-AD (78 FR 78285, December 26, 2013), stated the following: "The proposed wording, being specific to repairs, eliminates the interpretation that Airbus messages are acceptable for approving minor deviations (corrective actions) needed during accomplishment of an AD mandated Airbus service bulletin."

This comment has made the FAA aware that some operators have misunderstood or misinterpreted the Airworthy Product paragraph to allow the owner/operator to use messages provided by the manufacturer as approval of deviations during the accomplishment of an AD-mandated action. The Airworthy Product paragraph does not approve messages or other information provided by the manufacturer for deviations to the requirements of the AD-mandated actions. The Airworthy Product paragraph only addresses the requirement to contact the manufacturer for corrective actions for the identified unsafe condition and does not cover deviations from other AD requirements. However, deviations to AD-required actions are addressed in 14 CFR 39.17, and

anyone may request the approval for an alternative method of compliance to the AD-required actions using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19.

To address this misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the Airworthy Product paragraph, we have changed that paragraph and retitled it "Contacting the Manufacturer." This paragraph now clarifies that for any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the FAA, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), or Airbus's EASA DOA.

The Contacting the Manufacturer paragraph also clarifies that, if approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature. The DOA signature indicates that the data and information contained in the document are EASA-approved, which is also FAA-approved. Messages and other information provided by the manufacturer that do not contain the DOA-authorized signature approval are not EASA-approved, unless EASA directly approves the manufacturer's message or other information.

This clarification does not remove flexibility previously afforded by the Airworthy Product paragraph. Consistent with long-standing FAA policy, such flexibility was never intended for required actions. This is also consistent with the recommendation of the Airworthiness Directive Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee to increase flexibility in complying with ADs by identifying those actions in manufacturers' service instructions that are "Required for Compliance" with ADs. We continue to work with manufacturers to implement this recommendation. But once we determine that an action is required, any deviation from the requirement must be approved as an alternative method of compliance.

FAA's Determination of the Effective Date

An unsafe condition exists that requires the immediate adoption of this AD. The FAA has found that the risk to the flying public justifies waiving notice and comment prior to adoption of this rule because missing fasteners on the frame may affect the structural integrity of the circumferential joint, which might result in rapid decompression. Therefore, we determined that notice and opportunity for public comment before issuing this AD are impracticable and that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in fewer 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-20**-*****; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-126-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 based on 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.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 7 airplanes 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 \$85 per work-hour. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of this AD on U.S. operators to be \$595, or \$85 per product.

In addition, we estimate that any necessary follow-on actions will take about 39 work-hours and require parts costing \$0, for a cost of \$3,315 per product. We have no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need these actions.

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition repair specified in this AD.

According to the manufacturer, some of the costs of this AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected individuals. We do not control warranty coverage for affected individuals. As a result, we have included all costs in our cost estimate.

Paperwork Reduction Act

A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB control number. The control number for the collection of information required by this AD is 2120-0056. The paperwork cost associated with this AD has been detailed in the Costs of Compliance section of this document and includes time for reviewing instructions, as well as completing and reviewing the collection of information. Therefore, all reporting associated with this AD is mandatory. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden and suggestions for reducing the burden should be directed to the FAA at 800 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20591, ATTN: Information Collection Clearance Officer, AES-200.

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.

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):



2014-15-16 Airbus: Amendment 39-17918. Docket No. FAA-2014-0486; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-126-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD becomes effective August 18, 2014.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to the Airbus airplanes identified in paragraphs (c)(1), (c)(2), and (c)(3) of this AD, certificated in any category, manufacturer serial numbers (MSN) 5230 through 5300 inclusive, except MSN 5255 and 5295.

(1) Model A319-111, -112, -115, -132, and -133 airplanes.

(2) Model A320-214, -232, and -233 airplanes.

(3) Model A321-211, -231, and -232 airplanes.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a report that when the cabin lining was removed during a cabin conversion it was discovered that fasteners were missing on the frame. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct missing fasteners which, if not corrected, could affect the structural integrity of the airframe and could result in rapid decompression.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Detailed Inspection

Within 60 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD: Do a detailed inspection to determine if any fasteners are missing on the structure at frame (FR) 24 between stringer (STR) 17 and STR 18 on the right side only, in accordance with the instructions in Airbus Alert Operators Transmission A53N006-14, dated May 13, 2014.

(h) Rototest Inspection and Corrective Actions

If, during the detailed inspection required by paragraph (g) of this AD, any fastener is found missing: Before the accumulation of 3,300 flight cycles since the airplane's first flight, or within 60 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, do a rototest inspection of the fastener holes for cracking and do all applicable corrective actions, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1285, dated January 29, 2014, except as required by paragraph (i) of this AD. Do all applicable corrective actions before further flight.

(i) Repair

If any crack is found during any inspection required by paragraph (h) of this AD: Before further flight, repair 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.

(j) Reporting Requirement

At the applicable time specified in paragraph (j)(1) or (j)(2) of this AD, report both positive and negative results of the inspections required by paragraphs (g) and (h) of this AD, as applicable, to Airbus, Customer Services Engineering, Emeric Mevel, Structure Engineer, Structure Engineering Support-SEES1, Customer Services; telephone +33(0)5 67-19 02 41; fax +33(0) 5 61 93 36 14; email emeric.mevel@airbus.com. The report must include the information specified in Figure A-FRAAA of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1285, dated January 29, 2014.

(1) If the inspection was done on or after the effective date of this AD: Within 30 days after that inspection.

(2) If the inspection was done before the effective date of this AD: Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD.

(k) Other FAA AD Provisions

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. 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.

(3) Reporting Requirements: A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a

collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2120-0056. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be approximately 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are mandatory. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden and suggestions for reducing the burden should be directed to the FAA at: 800 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20591, Attn: Information Collection Clearance Officer, AES-200.

(l) Related Information

Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2014-0146, dated June 11, 2014, for related information. You may examine the MCAI on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2014-0486.

(m) 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 Alert Operators Transmission A53N006-14, dated May 13, 2014.

(ii) Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1285, dated January 29, 2014.

(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 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 July 12, 2014.

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