

[Federal Register Volume 83, Number 68 (Monday, April 9, 2018)]

[Rules and Regulations]

[Pages 15048-15050]

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

[FR Doc No: 2018-06946]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0269; Product Identifier 2018-NM-051-AD; Amendment 39-19243; AD 2018-07-12]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus Model A350-941 airplanes. This AD requires performing repetitive station position pick-off unit (SPPU) calibration tests, and applying the corresponding airplane fault isolation if necessary. This AD was prompted by a report indicating malfunctions of the SPPU and failures of the internal wiring due to water ingress via certain electrical connectors, inducing subsequent icing during flight. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD becomes effective April 24, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of April 24, 2018.

We must receive comments on this AD by May 24, 2018.

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 final rule, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAL, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96;

fax +33 5 61 93 45 80; email continued-airworthiness.a350@airbus.com; internet <http://www.airbus.com>. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0269.

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-2018-0269; 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: Kathleen Arrigotti, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3218.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2018-0058, dated March 14, 2018 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus Model A350-941 airplanes. The MCAI states:

Occurrences have been reported by Airbus A350 operators of malfunctions of Station Position Pick-Off Units (SPPU). Investigations indicated that internal wiring failures occurred due to water ingress via certain electrical connectors, inducing subsequent icing during flight.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to hidden sensor signal drift (at flap station 3) which, in combination with an independent failure of a flap down drive disconnect, might lead to in-flight detachment of the outer flap surface, possibly resulting in damage to the aeroplane, and/or injury to persons on the ground.

Airbus determined that the SPPU calibration test can highlight all hidden faults, but this test is only scheduled after removal/installation of the equipment. Consequently, to address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus issued the SB [Service Bulletin A350-27-P021, dated February 13, 2018], providing instructions to accomplish the SPPU calibration test at regular intervals.

For the reason described above, this [EASA] AD requires repetitive SPPU calibration test and, depending on findings, accomplishment of applicable corrective action(s) [applying corresponding airplane fault isolation].

Pending the results of the on-going investigation, this [EASA] AD is still considered to be an interim measure and further [EASA] AD action may follow.

You may examine the MCAI on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0269.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A350-27-P021, dated February 13, 2018. The service information describes performing repetitive SPPU calibration tests, and applying the corresponding airplane fault isolation if necessary. 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.

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 the same type design.

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 malfunctions of the SPPU and failures of the internal wiring due to water ingress via certain electrical connectors can induce icing, which under certain conditions, could lead to in-flight detachment of the outer flap surface, and consequent damage to the airplane. 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-2018-0269; Product Identifier 2018-NM-051-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 Compliances

We estimate that this AD affects 6 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
SPPU calibration test	2 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$170 per test cycle	\$0	\$170 per test cycle	\$1,020 per test cycle

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

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):



2018-07-12 Airbus: Amendment 39-19243; Docket No. FAA-2018-0269; Product Identifier 2018-NM-051-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD becomes effective April 24, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all Airbus Model A350-941 airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a report indicating malfunctions of the station position pick-off unit (SPPU) and failures of the internal wiring due to water ingress via certain electrical connectors, inducing subsequent icing during flight. We are issuing this AD to address a hidden sensor signal drift, which, in combination with an independent failure of a flap down drive disconnect, could lead to in-flight detachment of the outer flap surface, and possibly result in damage to the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Repetitive SPPU Calibration Tests and Corrective Action

Within 200 flight cycles or 30 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first, accomplish a SPPU calibration test in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A350-27-P021, dated February 13, 2018. If any fault message appears after accomplishment of the SPPU calibration test, before further flight, apply the corresponding airplane fault isolation and continue with the SPPU calibration test. Repeat the SPPU calibration test thereafter at intervals not to exceed 200 flight cycles.

(h) 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 (i)(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.

(i) Related Information

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2018-0058, dated March 14, 2018, for related information. You may examine the MCAI on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0269.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Kathleen Arrigotti, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3218.

(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 A350-27-P021, dated February 13, 2018.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAL, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 45 80; email continued-airworthiness.a350@airbus.com; internet <http://www.airbus.com>.

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(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 Des Moines, Washington, on March 27, 2018.

Chris Spangenberg,
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.