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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0168; Product Identifier 2017-NM-135-AD; Amendment 39-19344; AD 2018-16-04]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus SAS Model A318, A319, and A320 series airplanes, and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, -232, -251N, -253N, and -271N airplanes. This AD was prompted by a revision of an airworthiness limitations document that specifies more restrictive maintenance requirements and airworthiness limitations. This AD requires revising the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate the specified maintenance requirements and airworthiness limitations. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective September 14, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of September 14, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EIAS, Rond-Point Emile Dewoitine No: 2, 31700 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 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-2018-0168.

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-2018-0168; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the

regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations (phone: 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 Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3223.

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 certain Airbus SAS Model A318, A319, and A320 series airplanes, and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, -232, -251N, -253N, and -271N airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on April 2, 2018 (83 FR 13885). The NPRM was prompted by a revision of an airworthiness limitations document that specifies more restrictive maintenance requirements and airworthiness limitations. The NPRM proposed to require revising the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate the specified maintenance requirements and airworthiness limitations.

We are issuing this AD to address the risks associated with the effects of aging on airplane systems. Such effects could change system characteristics, leading to an increased potential for failure of certain life-limited parts, and reduced structural integrity or controllability of the airplane.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2017-0170, dated September 7, 2017 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A318, A319, and A320 series airplanes, and Model A321-111, -211, -212, -213, -231, -232, -251N, -253N, and -271N airplanes. The MCAI states:

The System Equipment Maintenance Requirements (SEMR) for Airbus A320 family aeroplanes, which are approved by EASA, are currently defined and published in the Airbus A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 4 document. These instructions have been identified as mandatory for continued airworthiness.

Failure to accomplish these instructions could result in an unsafe condition.

Previously, EASA issued AD 2016-0093 [which corresponds to FAA AD 2017-19-24, Amendment 39-19054 (82 FR 44900, September 27, 2017) (“AD 2017-19-24”),] to require accomplishment of all maintenance tasks as described in ALS Part 4 at Revision 03. ALS Part 4 Revision 04 was not mandated because no significant changes were introduced with this Revision. The new ALS Part 4 Revision 05 (hereafter referred to as ‘the ALS’ in this [EASA] AD) includes new and/or more restrictive requirements and extends the applicability to model A320-251N, A320-271N, A321-251N, A321-253N and A321-271N aeroplanes.

For the reason described above, this [EASA] AD retains the requirements of EASA AD 2016-0093, which is superseded, and requires accomplishment of all tasks as described in the ALS.

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-2018-0168.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this final rule. We have considered the comment received. United Airlines indicated that they had no objection to the NPRM.

Explanation of Changes to Applicability

We have revised the applicability of this AD to identify model designations as published in the most recent type certificate data sheet for the affected models.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this final rule 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 addressing 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 SAS has issued Airbus SAS A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 4, "System Equipment Maintenance Requirements (SEMR)," Revision 05, dated April 6, 2017. This service information describes preventive maintenance requirements and includes updated inspections and intervals to be incorporated into the maintenance or inspection program. 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 1,133 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

We have determined that revising the maintenance or inspection program takes an average of 90 work-hours per operator, although this figure may vary from operator to operator. In the past, we have estimated that this action takes 1 work-hour per airplane. Since operators incorporate maintenance or inspection program changes for their affected fleet(s), we have determined that a per-operator estimate is more accurate than a per-airplane estimate. Therefore, we estimate the total cost per operator to be \$7,650 (90 work-hours x \$85 per work-hour).

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 and associated appliances to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

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):



2018-16-04 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39-19344; Docket No. FAA-2018-0168; Product Identifier 2017-NM-135-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective September 14, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

This AD affects AD 2017-19-24, Amendment 39-19054 (82 FR 44900, September 27, 2017) (“AD 2017-19-24”).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to the Airbus SAS airplanes identified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (c)(4) of this AD, certificated in any category, with an original certificate of airworthiness or original export certificate of airworthiness issued on or before April 6, 2017.

- (1) Model A318-111, -112, -121, and -122 airplanes.
- (2) Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes.
- (3) Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, -233, -251N, and -271N airplanes.
- (4) Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, -232, -251N, -253N, and -271N airplanes.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 05, Time Limits/Maintenance Checks.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a revision of an airworthiness limitations document that specifies more restrictive maintenance requirements and airworthiness limitations. We are issuing this AD to mitigate the risks associated with the effects of aging on airplane systems. Such effects could change system characteristics, leading to an increased potential for failure of certain life-limited parts, and reduced structural integrity or controllability of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Revision of Maintenance or Inspection Program

Within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, revise the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate Airbus SAS A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 4, “System Equipment Maintenance Requirements (SEMR),” Revision 05, dated April 6,

2017. The initial compliance time for doing the revised actions is at the applicable time specified in Airbus SAS A318/A319/A320/A321 ALS Part 4, "System Equipment Maintenance Requirements (SEMR)," Revision 05, dated April 6, 2017.

(h) No Alternative Actions or Intervals

After the maintenance or inspection program has been revised as required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (e.g., inspections) or intervals may be used unless the actions and intervals are approved as an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j)(1) of this AD.

(i) Terminating Action for AD 2017-19-24

Accomplishing the actions required by this AD terminates all requirements of AD 2017-19-24.

(j) 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 (k)(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 SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(k) Related Information

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2017-0170, dated September 7, 2017, 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-2018-0168.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3223.

(l) 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 SAS A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 4, "System Equipment Maintenance Requirements (SEMR)," Revision 05, dated April 6, 2017.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office–EIAS, Rond-Point Emile Dewoitine No: 2, 31700 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, 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 July 23, 2018.

James Cashdollar,
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.