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## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

#### **14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2018-0300; Product Identifier 2017-NM-134-AD; Amendment 39-19375; AD 2018-17-21]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes**

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

**ACTION:** Final rule.

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**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 revised fuel airworthiness limitations. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** This AD is effective October 4, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of October 4, 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](mailto: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-2018-0300.

#### **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-2018-0300; 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 Docket Operations, 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:** 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 27, 2018 (83 FR 18485). 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 revised fuel airworthiness limitations.

We are issuing this AD to address the potential of ignition sources inside fuel tanks, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss 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 AD 2017-0169, dated September 7, 2017 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for all 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 MCAI states:

The Fuel Airworthiness Limitations (FAL) 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 5 document. These instructions have been identified as mandatory for continued airworthiness. Failure to accomplish these instructions could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the aeroplane.

\* \* \* the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) published Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) 88, and the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) published interim Policy INT/POL/25/12. In response to these regulations, Airbus conducted a design review to develop FAL for Airbus A320 family aeroplanes.

The FAL were specified in Airbus A318/A319/A320/A321 FAL document ref. 95A.1931/05 at issue 04 for A318/A319/A320/A321 aeroplanes. This document was approved by EASA and is now referenced in Airbus A318/A319/A320/A321 ALS Part 5 to comply with EASA policy statement (EASA D2005/CPRO).

Previously, EASA issued AD 2014-0260 [which corresponds to FAA AD 2016-20-12, Amendment 39-18678 (81 FR 72507, October 20, 2016) (“AD 2016-20-12”)] to require accomplishment of all FAL-related actions as described in ALS Part 5 at Revision 01. ALS Part 5 Revision 02 and 03 were not mandated because no significant changes were introduced with these Revisions. The new ALS Part 5 Revision 04

(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 reasons described above, this [EASA] AD retains the requirements of EASA AD 2014-0260, which is superseded, and requires implementation of the actions specified 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-2018-0300.

## **Comments**

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this final rule. 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 final rule as proposed with the changes described previously and 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.

We also determined that these changes will not increase the economic burden on any operator or increase the scope of this final rule.

## **Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51**

Airbus SAS has issued Airbus A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 5 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations (FAL), Revision 04, dated April 6, 2017. This service information describes fuel system airworthiness limitations. 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 1,250 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 we recognize that this number 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):



**2018-17-21 Airbus SAS:** Amendment 39-19375; Docket No. FAA-2018-0300; Product Identifier 2017-NM-134-AD.

**(a) Effective Date**

This AD is effective October 4, 2018.

**(b) Affected ADs**

This AD affects AD 2016-20-12, Amendment 39-18678 (81 FR 72507, October 20, 2016) (“AD 2016-20-12”).

**(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 address the potential of ignition sources inside fuel tanks, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss 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 A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 5 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations (FAL), Revision 04, dated April 6, 2017. The initial compliance times for new or revised tasks are the minimum intervals or times specified in Airbus

A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 5 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations (FAL), Revision 04, dated April 6, 2017, or within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

**(h) No Alternative Actions, Intervals, or Critical Design Configuration Control Limitations (CDCCLs)**

After the maintenance or inspection program has been revised as required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (e.g., inspections), intervals, or CDCCLs may be used unless the actions, intervals, and CDCCLs 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 2016-20-12**

Accomplishing the actions required by this AD terminates all requirements of AD 2016-20-12.

**(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 AD 2017-0169, 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-2018-0300.

(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 A318/A319/A320/A321 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 5 Fuel Airworthiness Limitations (FAL), Revision 04, 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](mailto: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 August 17, 2018.

Michael Kaszycki,  
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.