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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0758; Product Identifier 2018-NM-093-AD; Amendment 39-19493; AD 2018-23-07]

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 A350-941 airplanes. This AD was prompted by a review of the Airbus A350 structure design principles database for type definition that revealed that the balancer fitting part, installed on the tail cone, on a certain frame (FR) has several corrosion-resistant stainless steel nuts that do not meet the requirements for protection against corrosion. This AD requires application of a new additional overcoat sealant and elastic varnish on the affected nuts and fasteners. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective December 19, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of December 19, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office–EAL, Rond-Point Emile Dewoitine No: 2, 31700 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 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-2018-0758.

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-2018-0758; 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 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: 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

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 A350-941 airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on August 16, 2018 (83 FR 40708). The NPRM was prompted by a review of the Airbus A350 structure design principles database for type definition that revealed that the balancer fitting part, installed on the tail cone, on a certain FR has several corrosion-resistant stainless steel nuts that do not meet the requirements for protection against corrosion. The NPRM proposed to require application of a new additional overcoat sealant and elastic varnish on the affected nuts and fasteners.

We are issuing this AD to address several corrosion-resistant stainless steel nuts installed on elementary aluminum parts, which do not meet the requirements for protection against corrosion, and if not corrected, could reduce the structural integrity 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 2018-0123, dated June 4, 2018 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes. The MCAI states:

Following a complete review of the Airbus A350 structure design principles database for type definition, it was revealed that the balancer fitting part, installed on the tail cone, lower section of Frame (FR) 103, has several corrosion resistant stainless steel nuts installed on elementary aluminium parts, which does not meet the requirements for protection against corrosion.

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

To address this unsafe condition, Airbus developed production mod 110319 to improve protection against corrosion, and issued the SB [Airbus Service Bulletin A350-53-P024] to provide modification instructions for in-service pre-mod aeroplanes. At the same time the production mod 110348 is equivalent to in-service solution.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires a modification, adding new additional overcoat sealant and elastic varnish on the affected nuts and fastener heads.

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-2018-0758.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this final rule. The following presents the comments received on the NPRM and the FAA's response to each comment.

Support for the NPRM

The Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) indicated their support for the NPRM.

Request To Clarify the Proposed AD's Applicability

The commenter Mary Dunn inquired about the proposed AD's effect on similar airplanes and if the actions proposed in the NPRM are proactive or retroactive.

We acknowledge the comment and note that this AD will only affect certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes, not airplanes similar to Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes. The unsafe condition has only been identified to affect Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes, not other models, so no action is needed on other airplane models. This AD does have both proactive and retroactive components, in that this AD applies to existing Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes, as specified in paragraph (c) of this AD, while the actions required by paragraph (g) of this AD will be embodied on future Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes in production. No change to this AD has been made in this regard.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments 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 has issued Service Bulletin A350-53-P024, dated April 3, 2018. This service information describes procedures for application of a new additional overcoat sealant and elastic varnish on the affected nuts and fasteners. 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 7 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs			
Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
2 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$170	\$500	\$670	\$4,690

According to the manufacturer, some or all 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 known costs in our cost estimate.

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):



FAA
Aviation Safety

AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE

www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/alerts/
www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/advanced.html

2018-23-07 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39-19493; Docket No. FAA-2018-0758; Product Identifier 2018-NM-093-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective December 19, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes, certificated in any category, except those on which Airbus modification 110319 or Airbus modification 110348 has been embodied in production.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a review of the Airbus A350 structure design principles database for type definition that revealed that the balancer fitting part, installed on the tail cone, lower section of frame (FR) 103, has several corrosion-resistant stainless steel nuts installed on elementary aluminum parts, and this configuration does not meet the requirements for protection against corrosion. We are issuing this AD to address this condition, which if not corrected, could reduce the structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Required Action

Within 72 months since the date of issuance of the original airworthiness certificate or the date of issuance of the original export certificate of airworthiness, apply additional overcoat sealant and elastic varnish to the fastener heads and the anchor nuts of the balancer fitting at FR 103, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A350-53-P024, dated April 3, 2018.

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

(3) Required for Compliance (RC): 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.

(i) Related Information

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA AD 2018-0123, dated June 4, 2018, 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-2018-0758.

(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 A350-53-P024, dated April 3, 2018.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAL, Rond-Point Emile Dewoitine No: 2, 31700 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 November 2, 2018.
Jeffrey E. Duven,
Director, System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.