

[Federal Register Volume 84, Number 114 (Thursday, June 13, 2019)]

[Rules and Regulations]

[Pages 27506-27508]

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

[FR Doc No: 2019-12352]

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## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

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

**[Docket No. FAA-2019-0405; Product Identifier 2019-NM-003-AD; Amendment 39-19647; AD 2019-11-01]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

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

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

**ACTION:** Final rule; request for comments.

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**SUMMARY:** We are superseding Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2018-25-12, which applied to certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes. AD 2018-25-12 required modifying the vertical tail plane (VTP) tension bolts connection by adding sealant and protective treatment to the head of the connection, at the barrel nut cavities, and in the surrounding area. Since we issued AD 2018-25-12, it was determined that the instructions for certain airplanes are unclear for proper accomplishment of the required modification. This AD, for certain airplanes, requires accomplishing a revised modification and, for certain other airplanes, retains the modification required by AD 2018-25-12, as specified in an European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which will be incorporated by reference. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** This AD becomes effective June 28, 2019.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of June 28, 2019.

We must receive comments on this AD by July 29, 2019.

**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 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For the material incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact the EASA, at Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 1000; email: ADs@easa.europa.eu; internet: www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this IBR material 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 in the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

### **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-2019-0405; 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 AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (phone: 800-647-5527) is listed above. 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**

We issued AD 2018-25-12, Amendment 39-19523 (83 FR 64230, December 14, 2018) (“AD 2018-25-12”), which applied to certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes. AD 2018-25-12 required modifying the VTP tension bolts connection by adding sealant and protective treatment to the head of the connection, at the barrel nut cavities, and in the surrounding area. AD 2018-25-12 resulted from a determination that certain holes for the VTP tension bolts connection are not properly protected against corrosion. We issued AD 2018-25-12 to address corrosion of the VTP tension bolts connection, which could reduce the structural integrity of the VTP, and could ultimately lead to reduced controllability of the airplane.

#### **Actions Since AD 2018-25-12 Was Issued**

Since we issued AD 2018-25-12, it was determined that the instructions for certain airplanes (Group 2 airplanes as identified in the EASA AD identified below), are unclear for proper accomplishment of the required modification.

The EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2018-0290, dated December 21, 2018 (“EASA AD 2018-0290”) (also referred to 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:

It was identified that the section 19 holes for the Vertical Tail Plane (VTP) tension bolts connection are not properly protected against corrosion.

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

To address this unsafe condition, Airbus developed production mod 108307 and mod 110696 to improve protection against corrosion, and issued the SB [service bulletin] to provide in-service modification instructions. Consequently, EASA issued AD 2018-

0045 [which corresponds to FAA 2018-25-12] to require a modification by adding sealant and protective treatment to the head of the section 19 VTP tension bolts connection, at the barrel nut cavities and in the surrounding area.

Since that [EASA] AD was issued, it was identified that the instructions for Group 2 aeroplanes, as identified in the SB, were not clear enough for proper accomplishment. Consequently, Airbus published Revision 01 of the SB to clarify those instructions for Group 2 aeroplanes.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD retains the requirements of EASA AD 2018-0045, which is superseded, and requires, for Group 2 aeroplanes, accomplishment of the modification in accordance with the instructions of Revision 01 of the SB.

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-2019-0405.

### **Explanation of Retained Requirements**

Although this AD does not explicitly restate the requirements of AD 2018-25-12, this AD retains certain requirements of AD 2018-25-12 with clarified instructions. Those requirements are referenced in EASA AD 2018-0290, which, in turn, is referenced in paragraph (g) of this AD.

### **Related IBR Material Under 1 CFR Part 51**

EASA AD 2018-0290 describes procedures for implementing the means to protect the section 19 VTP frames connections (by modifying the VTP tension bolts connection by adding sealant and protective treatment to the head of the connection, at the barrel nut cavities, and in the surrounding area). This material 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**

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 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.

### **Requirements of This AD**

This AD requires accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2018-0290 described previously, through the incorporation by reference of EASA AD 2018-0290, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD.

### **Explanation of Required Compliance Information**

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA worked with Airbus and EASA to develop a process to use certain EASA ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. As a result, EASA AD 2018-0290 is incorporated by reference in the FAA final rule. This AD, therefore, requires

compliance with the provisions specified in EASA AD 2018-0290, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD. Service information specified in EASA AD 2018-0290 that is required for compliance with EASA AD 2018-0290 is available on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0405.

### **FAA's Justification and Determination of the Effective Date**

Since there are currently no domestic operators of this product, notice and opportunity for public comment before issuing this AD are unnecessary. In addition, for the reasons stated above, we find that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less 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-2019-0405; Product Identifier 2019-NM-003-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**

Currently, there are no U.S.-registered airplanes. If an affected airplane is imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, we provide the following cost estimates to comply with this AD:

#### **Estimated Costs for Required Actions**

<b>Labor cost</b>	<b>Parts cost</b>	<b>Cost per product</b>
48 work-hour × \$85 per hour = \$4,080	\$9,200	\$13,280

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**

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 removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2018-25-12, Amendment 39-19523 (83 FR 64230, December 14, 2018), and adding the following new AD:



**2019-11-01 Airbus SAS:** Amendment 39-19647; Docket No. FAA-2019-0405; Product Identifier 2019-NM-003-AD.

**(a) Effective Date**

This AD becomes effective June 28, 2019.

**(b) Affected ADs**

This AD replaces AD 2018-25-12, Amendment 39-19523 (83 FR 64230, December 14, 2018) (“AD 2018-25-12”).

**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to Airbus SAS Model A350-941 airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2018-0290, dated December 21, 2018 (“EASA AD 2018-0290”).

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 55, Stabilizers.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by a determination that certain holes for the vertical tail plane (VTP) tension bolts connection are not properly protected against corrosion. We are issuing this AD to address corrosion of the VTP tension bolts connection, which could reduce the structural integrity of the VTP, and could ultimately lead to reduced controllability of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

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

**(g) Requirements**

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2018-0290.

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2018-0290**

(1) For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD: Where EASA AD 2018-0290 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where EASA AD 2018-0290 refers to a compliance time after March 1, 2018, this AD requires using January 18, 2019 (the effective date of AD 2018-25-12).

(3) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2018-0290 does not apply to this AD.

**(i) 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 (j) 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 instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA; or 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): For any service information referenced in EASA AD 2018-0290 that contains RC procedures and tests: Except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD, RC 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.

**(j) Related Information**

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.

**(k) 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) European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2018-0290, dated December 21, 2018.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA AD 2018-0290, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 6017; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>.

(4) You may view this EASA AD 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. EASA AD 2018-0290 may be found in the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0405.

(5) You may view this material 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 May 29, 2019.  
Michael Kaszycki,  
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.