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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2019-0978; Product Identifier 2019-NM-163-AD; Amendment 39-19897; AD 2020-07-18]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

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

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is superseding Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2017-05-12, which applied to certain Airbus SAS Model A318-112 airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -115, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-214, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. AD 2017-05-12 required a one-time eddy current conductivity measurement of certain cabin, cargo compartment, and frame structural parts to determine if aluminum alloy with inadequate heat treatment was used, and replacement if necessary. This AD retains the requirements of AD 2017-05-12, and for certain airplanes, requires additional work, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is incorporated by reference. This AD was prompted by a determination that aluminum alloy with inadequate heat treatment had been used for additional structural parts. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective May 26, 2020.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of May 26, 2020.

ADDRESSES: For the material incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact the EASA, 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 <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0978.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0978; 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 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: Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3223; email sanjay.ralhan@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

The EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2019-0196, dated August 14, 2019 (“EASA AD 2019-0196”) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A318-112 airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -115, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-214, -216, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to supersede AD 2017-05-12, Amendment 39-18823 (82 FR 13382, March 13, 2017) (“AD 2017-05-12”), which applied to certain Airbus SAS Model A318-112 airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -115, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-214, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on December 16, 2019 (84 FR 68376). The NPRM was prompted by a determination that aluminum alloy with inadequate heat treatment had been used for additional structural parts. The NPRM proposed to retain the requirements of AD 2017-05-12, and for certain airplanes, would require additional work. The FAA is issuing this AD to address structural parts made of aluminum alloy with inadequate heat treatment, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Comments

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

Request To Extend Compliance Time

American Airlines (AAL) asked that the FAA extend the compliance time for the additional work required by paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2019-0196. AAL asked that the compliance time be changed from within 108 months to within 120 months (10 years) from the date of aircraft manufacture due to the nature of the work, and in order for affected airplanes to do the work at the next scheduled heavy maintenance check opportunity.

The FAA does not agree with the commenter's request to extend the compliance time. AAL did not provide information showing that the revised compliance time would provide an adequate level of safety. The FAA has determined that the 108-month compliance time in EASA AD 2019-0196 addresses the identified unsafe condition in a timely manner. In developing an appropriate compliance time, EASA considered the degree of urgency associated with addressing the subject unsafe condition, the average utilization of the affected fleet, and the time necessary to perform the

additional work. The FAA has determined that the compliance time specified in EASA AD 2019-0196 represents an appropriate interval of time for affected airplanes to continue to operate without compromising safety. However, under the provisions of paragraph (i)(1) of this AD, the FAA will consider requests for approval of an extension of the compliance time if sufficient data are submitted to substantiate that the new compliance time would provide an acceptable level of safety. The AD has not been changed in this regard.

Conclusion

The FAA has 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. The FAA has 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 IBR Material Under 1 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2019-0196 describes procedures for a one-time eddy current conductivity measurement of certain cabin, cargo compartment, and frame structural parts to determine if aluminum alloy with inadequate heat treatment was used, and replacement if necessary. EASA AD 2019-0196 also describes, for certain airplanes, additional work (a one-time eddy current conductivity measurement of certain other structural parts, and replacement if necessary). 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.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 63 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs for Required Actions

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Retained actions from AD 2017-05-12	6 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$510	\$0	\$510	\$32,130.
New actions	Up to 7 work-hours × \$85 per hour = Up to \$595	\$0	Up to \$595	Up to \$37,485.

The FAA has received no definitive data that enables the agency to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this AD.

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. The FAA does not control warranty coverage for affected individuals. As a result, the FAA has included all known costs in the 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.

The FAA is 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.

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) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) 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) 2017-05-12, Amendment 39-18823 (82 FR 13382, March 13, 2017), and adding the following new AD:



2020-07-18 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39-19897; Docket No. FAA-2019-0978; Product Identifier 2019-NM-163-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective May 26, 2020.

(b) Affected ADs

This AD replaces AD 2017-05-12, Amendment 39-18823 (82 FR 13382, March 13, 2017) (“AD 2017-05-12”).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to the Airbus SAS airplanes identified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (4) of this AD, certificated in any category, as identified in European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2019-0196, dated August 14, 2019 (“EASA AD 2019-0196”).

- (1) Model A318-112 airplanes.
- (2) Model A319-111, -112, -115, -132, and -133 airplanes.
- (3) Model A320-214, -216, -232, and -233 airplanes.
- (4) Model A321-211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a determination that aluminum alloy with inadequate heat treatment was used for certain structural parts, including additional structural parts not addressed in AD 2017-05-12. The FAA is issuing this AD to address structural parts made of aluminum alloy with inadequate heat treatment, which could result in reduced structural integrity 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 2019-0196.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2019-0196

- (1) Where EASA AD 2019-0196 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.
- (2) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2019-0196 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.

(i) 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.

(ii) AMOCs approved previously for AD 2017-05-12 are approved as AMOCs for the corresponding provisions of EASA AD 2019-0196 that are required by paragraph (g) of this AD.

(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 2019-0196 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 Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3223; email sanjay.ralhan@faa.gov.

(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.

(3) The following service information was approved for IBR on May 26, 2020.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2019-0196, dated August 14, 2019.

(ii) [Reserved]

(4) For information about EASA AD 2019-0196, 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>.

(5) You may view this 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. This material may be found in the AD docket on the internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0978.

(6) 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, email fedreg.legal@nara.gov, or go to: <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued on April 7, 2020.

Ross Landes,
Deputy Director for Regulatory Operations, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

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