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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2022-0457; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-00263-T; Amendment 39-22125; AD 2022-15-05]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. This AD was prompted by a report that cracks were found on the web horizontal flange and inner cap on a certain frame (FR), left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) sides, at a certain stringer (STGR). This AD requires repetitive high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections for cracks on the web horizontal flange and inner cap, and applicable corrective actions, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is incorporated by reference. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective August 31, 2022.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of August 31, 2022.

ADDRESSES: For material incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; 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 material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety 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 at www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0457.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket at www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0457; 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 mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), 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: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th Street, Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 206-231-3225; email dan.rodina@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2022-0030, dated February 25, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0030) (also referred to as the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A318-111, A318-112, A318-121, A318-122, A319-111, A319-112, A319-113, A319-114, A319-115, A319-131, A319-132, A319-133, A320-211, A320-212, A320-214, A320-215, A320-216, A320-231, A320-232, A320-233, A321-111, A321-112, A321-131, A321-211, A321-212, A321-213, A321-231, and A321-232 airplanes. Model A320-215 airplanes are not certificated by the FAA and are not included on the U.S. type certificate data sheet; this proposed AD therefore does not include those airplanes in the applicability.

The FAA 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 A318-111, A318-112, A318-121, A318-122, A319-111, A319-112, A319-113, A319-114, A319-115, A319-131, A319-132, A319-133, A320-211, A320-212, A320-214, A320-216, A320-231, A320-232, A320-233, A321-111, A321-112, A321-131, A321-211, A321-212, A321-213, A321-231, and A321-232 airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on April 14, 2022 (87 FR 22156). The NPRM was prompted by a report that during the inspection for the door stop fitting holes at FR 66 and FR 68 required by EASA AD 2016-0238, dated December 2, 2016; corrected January 4, 2017 (which corresponds to FAA AD 2018-03-12, Amendment 39-19185 (83 FR 5906, February 12, 2018)); cracks were found on the web horizontal flange and inner cap on FR 68, LH and RH sides, at STGR 22. The NPRM proposed to require repetitive HFEC inspections for cracks on the web horizontal flange and inner cap on FR 68, LH and RH sides, at STGR 22, and applicable corrective actions (e.g., repairs), as specified in EASA AD 2022-0030.

The FAA is issuing this AD to address the cracks on the web horizontal flange and inner cap on FR 68, LH and RH sides, at STGR 22, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage. See the MCAI for additional background information.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA received comments from United Airlines, who supported the NPRM without change.

Conclusion

The FAA reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety requires adopting this AD as proposed. Except for minor editorial changes, and any other

changes described previously, this AD is adopted as proposed in the NPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator. Accordingly, the FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2022-0030 specifies procedures for repetitive HFEC inspections for cracks at the web horizontal flange and inner cap on FR 68, LH and RH sides, at STGR 22, and applicable corrective actions (e.g., repairs).

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.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 1,585 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs for Required Actions			
Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
28 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$2,380	\$0	\$2,380	\$3,772,300

The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this AD.

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.

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:



2022-15-05 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39-22125; Docket No. FAA-2022-0457; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-00263-T.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective August 31, 2022.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus SAS airplanes specified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (4) of this AD, certificated in any category, as identified in European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0030, dated February 25, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0030).

- (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, and -233 airplanes.
- (4) Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report that cracks were found on the web horizontal flange and inner cap on frame (FR) 68, left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) sides, at stringer (STGR) 22. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the cracks on the web horizontal flange and inner cap on FR 68, LH and RH sides, at STGR 22, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage.

(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 2022-0030.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2022-0030

(1) Where EASA AD 2022-0030 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2022-0030 does not apply to this AD.

(3) Where paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2022-0030 specifies “Accomplishment on an aeroplane of (repetitive) maintenance instructions, issued and approved by Airbus,” for this AD, those instructions must have been approved by the Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation 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.

(4) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0030 specifies if “discrepancies and/or cracks are detected, before next flight, contact Airbus for approved corrective action(s) instructions and, within the compliance time specified therein, accomplish those instructions accordingly,” for this AD, if cracks are detected, the cracks must be repaired before further flight using a method approved by the Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA DOA. If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(5) Where paragraph (4) of EASA AD 2022-0030 specifies “the instructions provided by Airbus,” for this AD, those instructions must be approved by the Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA DOA. If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(i) Additional AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation 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 responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch of the certification office, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards 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, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA DOA. If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) Required for Compliance (RC): Except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD, 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.

(j) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th Street, Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 206-231-3225; email dan.rodina@faa.gov.

(k) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference 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 Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0030, dated February 25, 2022.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA AD 2022-0030, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; 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 material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety 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 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 fr.inspection@nara.gov, or go to: www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.

Issued on July 8, 2022.

Christina Underwood,

Acting Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

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