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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2023-2004; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00977-T; Amendment 39-22656; AD 2024-01-05]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY:

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION:

Final rule.

SUMMARY:

The FAA is superseding Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2022-01-07, which applied to certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 and -1041 airplanes. AD 2022-01-07 required revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations. This AD retains the actions required by AD 2022-01-07 and also requires revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations, 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 March 7, 2024.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of March 7, 2024.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain other publication listed in this AD as of March 8, 2022 ([87 FR 5391](#), February 1, 2022).

ADDRESSES:

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA–2023–2004; 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.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- For EASA material identified in this final rule, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone: +49 221 8999 000; email: ADs@easa.europa.eu; website: easa.europa.eu. You may find this material on the EASA website ad.easa.europa.eu.
- You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th Street, 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 *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA–2023–2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dat Le, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone 562–627–5357; email dat.v.le@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend [14 CFR part 39](#) to supersede AD 2022–01–07, Amendment 39–21895 ([87 FR 5391](#), February 1, 2022) (AD 2022–01–07). AD 2022–01–07 applied to certain Airbus SAS Model A350–941 and –1041 airplanes. AD 2022–01–07 required revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations. The FAA issued AD 2022–01–07 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 NPRM published in the **Federal Register** on October 26, 2023 ([88 FR 73545](#)). The NPRM was prompted by AD 2023–0162, dated August 17, 2023, issued by EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union (EASA AD 2023–0162) (also referred to as the MCAI). The MCAI states that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations have been developed.

In the NPRM, the FAA proposed to retain the actions required by AD 2022–01–07 and also require revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations, as specified in EASA AD 2023–0162. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA–2023–2004.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA received comments from Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) who supported the NPRM without change. The FAA also received a comment from an anonymous commenter who expressed appreciation for FAA's dedication to aviation safety. No changes to the AD were requested; therefore, the FAA infers that the commenter supported the NPRM.

Conclusion

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety requires adopting this AD as proposed. Accordingly, the FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on this product. Except for minor editorial changes, this AD is adopted as proposed in the NPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator.

Related Service Information Under [1 CFR Part 51](#)

The FAA reviewed EASA AD 2023–0162. This service information specifies new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations related to fuel tank ignition prevention and fuel tank flammability reduction.

This AD also requires EASA AD 2021–0209, dated September 15, 2021, which the Director of the Federal Register approved for incorporation by reference as of March 8, 2022 ([87 FR 5391](#), February 1, 2022).

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

The FAA has determined that revising the existing maintenance or inspection program takes an average of 90 work-hours per operator, although the agency recognizes that this number may vary from operator to operator. Since operators incorporate maintenance or inspection program changes for their affected fleet(s), the FAA has determined that a per-operator estimate is more accurate than a per-airplane estimate.

The FAA estimates the total cost per operator for the new actions to be \$7,650 (90 work-hours × \$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.

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:

- a.** Removing Airworthiness Directive 2022–01–07, Amendment 39–21895 ([87 FR 5391](#), February 1, 2022); and

b. Adding the following new Airworthiness Directive:

2024-01-05 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39-22656; Docket No. FAA-2023-2004; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00977-T.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective March 7, 2024.

(b) Affected ADs

This AD replaces AD 2022-01-07, Amendment 39-21895 ([87 FR 5391](#), February 1, 2022) (AD 2022-01-07).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies all Airbus SAS Model A350-941 and -1041 airplanes, certificated in any category, with an original airworthiness certificate or original export certificate of airworthiness issued on or before June 1, 2023.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 05, Time Limits/Maintenance Checks.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a determination that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations are necessary. The FAA is 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) Retained Revision of the Existing Maintenance or Inspection Program, With AD 2022-01-07, With No Changes

This paragraph restates the requirements of paragraph (g) of AD 2022-01-07, with no changes. For airplanes with an original airworthiness certificate or original export certificate of airworthiness issued on or before June 30, 2021: Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2021-0209, dated September 15, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0209). Accomplishing the revision of the existing maintenance or inspection program required by paragraph (j) of this AD terminates the requirements of this paragraph.

(h) Retained Exceptions to EASA AD 2021-0209, With No Changes

This paragraph restates the exceptions specified in paragraph (h) of AD 2022-01-07, with no changes.

(1) The requirements specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of EASA AD 2021-0209 do not apply to this AD.

(2) Paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0209 specifies revising “the AMP [aircraft maintenance program]” within 12 months after its effective date, but this AD requires revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate the “limitations, tasks and associated thresholds and intervals” specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0209 within 90 days after March 8, 2022 (the effective date of AD 2022-01-07).

(3) The initial compliance time for doing the tasks specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0209 is at the applicable “associated thresholds” specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0209, or within 90 days after March 8, 2022 (the effective date of AD 2022-01-07), whichever occurs later.

(4) The provisions specified in paragraphs (4) and (5) of EASA AD 2021-0209 do not apply to this AD.

(5) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2021-0209 does not apply to this AD.

(i) Retained Restrictions on Alternative Actions, Intervals, and Critical Design Configuration Control Limitations (CDCCLs), With No Changes

This paragraph restates the requirements of paragraph (i) of AD 2022-01-07, with no changes. Except as required by paragraph (j) of this AD, after the maintenance or inspection program has been revised as required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (*e.g.*, inspections), intervals, and CDCCLs are allowed unless they are approved as specified in the provisions of the “Ref. Publications” section of EASA AD 2021-0209.

(j) New Revision of the Existing Maintenance or Inspection Program

Except as specified in paragraph (k) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2023-0162, dated August 17, 2023 (EASA AD 2023-0162). Accomplishing the revision of the existing maintenance or inspection program required by this paragraph terminates the requirements of paragraph (g) of this AD.

(k) Exceptions to EASA AD 2023-0162

(1) This AD does not adopt the requirements specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of EASA AD 2023-0162.

(2) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2023-0162 specifies “Within 12 months after the effective date of this AD, revise the AMP,” this AD requires replacing those words with “Within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, revise the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable.”

(3) The initial compliance time for doing the tasks specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2023-0162 is at the applicable “limitations” and “associated thresholds” as incorporated by the requirements of paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2023-0162, or within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(4) This AD does not adopt the provisions specified in paragraphs (4) and (5) of EASA AD 2023–0162.

(5) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2023–0162.

(l) New Provisions for Alternative Actions, Intervals, and CDCCLs

After the existing maintenance or inspection program has been revised as required by paragraph (j) of this AD, no alternative actions (*e.g.*, inspections), intervals, and CDCCLs are allowed unless they are approved as specified in the provisions of the “Ref. Publications” section of EASA AD 2023–0162.

(m) Additional AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, 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 manager of the International Validation Branch, mail it to the address identified in paragraph (n) of this AD or email to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov. If mailing information, also submit information by email. 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, 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.

(n) Additional Information

For more information about this AD, contact Dat Le, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone 562–627–5357; email dat.v.le@faa.gov.

(o) 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 March 7, 2024.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2023–0162, dated August 17, 2023.

(ii) [Reserved]

(4) The following service information was approved for IBR on March 8, 2022 ([87 FR 5391](#), February 1, 2022).

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2021–0209, dated September 15, 2021.

(ii) [Reserved]

(5) For EASA AD 2023–0162 and EASA AD 2021–0209, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone: +49 221 8999 000; email: ADs@easa.europa.eu; website: easa.europa.eu. You may find these EASA ADs on the EASA website: ad.easa.europa.eu.

(6) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th Street, Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

(7) You may view this material at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, visit www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations or email fr.inspection@nara.gov.

Issued on January 26, 2024.

Michael Linegang,

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

[[FR Doc. 2024–01966](#) Filed 1–31–24; 8:45 am]

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