supplemental type certificate (STC) SA2786CE, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (d) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required within the next 100 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent interference between the side trim of the left-hand (LH) side lower panel and the roll control compass on the LH wheel assembly, which, if not corrected, could result in loss of directional control of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Modify the LH front side lower panel in accordance with part ''B. MODIFICATION'' of the ACCOMPLISHMENT INSTRUCTIONS section of SOCATA Service Bulletin No. SB70–061–25, dated June, 1995.

(b) The instructions in this AD take precedence over part ''A. CHECK: DURING EACH PREFLIGHT INSPECTION'' of the ACCOMPLISHMENT INSTRUCTIONS section in SOCATA Service Bulletin No. SB70–061–25, dated June, 1995.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(d) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an equivalent level of safety may be approved by the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Airplane Certification Service, FAA, 1201 Walnut, Suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Small Airplane Directorate.

(e) Questions or technical information related to SOCATA Service Bulletin No. SB 70–061–25, dated June 1995, should be directed to SOCATA—Groupe AEROSPATIALE, Support Client/Customer Support, Aerodrome Tarbes-Ossun-Lourdes, B P 930, F65009 Tarbes Cedex, France; telephone (33) 62.41.73.00; facsimile (33) 62.41.76.54, or the Product Support Manager, SOCATA—Groupe AEROSPATIALE, North Perry Airport, 7501 Pembroke Road, Pembroke Pines, Florida 33023; telephone (954) 964–6877; facsimile: (954) 964–1668. This service information may be examined at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in the French AD 95–166(B), dated September 13, 1995.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on January 28, 1998.

Terry L. Chasteen,

Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–2773 Filed 2–4–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–263–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Aerospatiale Model ATR72 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Aerospatiale Model ATR72 series airplanes. This proposal would require a one-time high frequency eddy current inspection to detect cracking of the lower fuselage structure, and repair, if necessary. This proposal also would require modification of certain fastener holes in the lower fuselage structure. This proposal is prompted by the issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent reduced structural integrity of the airplane due to fatigue cracking in the lower fuselage structure.

DATES: Comments must be received by March 9, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–263–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Aerospatiale, 316 Route de Bayonne, 31060 Toulouse, Cedex 03, France. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Norman B. Martenson, Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–2110; fax (425) 227–1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket Number 97–NM–263–AD.'' The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–263–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Aerospatiale Model ATR72 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that the results of full-scale fatigue testing on a Model ATR72 test article revealed that fatigue cracks may develop in the lower

fuselage structure in the area of the side brace fitting near frame 25. Such fatigue cracking, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Aerospatiale has issued Service Bulletins ATR72–53–1022, Revision 2, dated February 20, 1995; ATR72–53–1034, Revision 1, dated March 28, 1995; and ATR72–53–1053, Revision 1, dated March 28, 1995. These service bulletins describe procedures for a one-time high frequency eddy current inspection to detect cracking of the lower fuselage structure; and modification of certain fastener holes in the lower fuselage structure in the area of the side brace fitting near frame 25 on the left- and right-hand sides. Accomplishment of the actions specified in these service bulletins is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The DGAC classified these service bulletins as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 94–191–022(B), dated August 17, 1994, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletins described previously; except that the repair of any crack or oversize hole would be required to be accomplished in accordance with a method approved by the FAA.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 7 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in Aerospatiale Service Bulletin ATR72–53–1022 would take approximately 80 work hours per airplane, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact on U.S. operators of the actions specified in this service bulletin and proposed by this AD is estimated to be $4,800 per airplane.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in Aerospatiale Service Bulletin ATR72–53–1034 would take approximately 65 work hours per airplane, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact on U.S. operators of the actions specified in this service bulletin and proposed by this AD is estimated to be $3,900 per airplane.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in Aerospatiale Service Bulletin ATR72–53–1053 would take approximately 65 work hours per airplane, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact on U.S. operators of the actions specified in this service bulletin and proposed by this AD is estimated to be $3,900 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (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); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Aerospatiale: Docket 97–NM–263–AD.

Applicability: Model ATR72 series airplanes on which Aerospatiale Modification 2879 or Modification 2628 has not been incorporated, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent reduced structural integrity of the airplane due to fatigue cracking in the lower fuselage structure, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 17,500 total flight cycles, or within 500 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later: Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this AD, perform a one-time high frequency eddy current inspection to detect fatigue cracking around the fastener holes in the lower fuselage structure in the area of the

side brace fitting near frame 25 on the left- and right-hand sides, and modify crack-free fastener holes, as required by paragraph (a)(1) and/or (a)(2) of this AD, as applicable.

(1) For airplanes on which Aerospatiale Modification 2879 has not been installed: Perform the inspection and modification in accordance with Aerospatiale Service Bulletin ATR72–53–1022, Revision 2, dated February 20, 1995.

(2) For airplanes on which Aerospatiale Modification 2628 has not been installed: Perform the inspection and modifications in accordance with Aerospatiale Service Bulletins ATR72–53–1034, Revision 1, and ATR72–53–1053, Revision 1, both dated March 28, 1995.

(b) If any crack or oversize hole is found during the accomplishment of paragraph (a) of this AD, and if any service bulletin listed in paragraph (a) of this AD specifies to contact the manufacturer for an appropriate corrective action: Prior to further flight, repair the discrepancy in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM–116.

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 94–191–022(B), dated August 17, 1994.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 29, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–2782 Filed 2–4–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–291–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Saab Model SAAB SF340A and 340B series airplanes. This proposal would require a one-time inspection to detect discrepancies of the flight idle stop override mechanism, and corrective action, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by the issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent increased braking distance for landings that require the flight idle stop override, resulting from the combination of failure of the override mechanism and inability of the power levers to be moved below the flight idle position after touchdown.

DATES: Comments must be received by March 9, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–291–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from SAAB Aircraft AB, SAAB Aircraft Product Support, S–581.88, Linköping, Sweden. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Norman B. Martenson, Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–2110; fax (425) 227–1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket Number 97–NM–291–AD.'' The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–291–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The Luftfartsverket (LFV), which is the airworthiness authority for Sweden, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B series airplanes. The LFV advises that it has received a report of an incident in which a flight crew, when attempting to use the automatic flight idle stop override that was required during landing, discovered the override knob was stuck in position in the control quadrant. Subsequent inspection of the override knob mechanism revealed that cablewire was stuck in its conduit between the knob and the uplock mechanism. It appeared that the cablewire may have become stuck during modification of the control quadrant for installation of the automatic flight idle stop. Similar sticking may occur on other airplanes