

The incorporation by reference of PW ASB No. 6038, Revision 5, dated August 17, 1994, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of November 28, 1994 (59 FR 49175, September 27, 1994). Copies may be obtained from Pratt & Whitney, 400 Main St., East Hartford, CT 06108; telephone (860) 565-6600, fax (860) 565-4503. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(m) This amendment becomes effective on August 10, 1998.

Issued in Burlington, Massachusetts, on May 29, 1998.

**Jay J. Pardee,**

*Manager, Engine and Propeller Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-15086 Filed 6-8-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-NM-184-AD; Amendment 39-10573; AD 98-12-18]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320-111, -211, and -231 Series Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A320-111, -211, and -231 series airplanes, that requires repetitive inspections for cracking in the transition and pick-up angles in the lower part of the center fuselage area, and corrective action, if necessary. This amendment also provides for an optional terminating modification for the repetitive inspection requirements. This amendment is prompted by the issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by this AD are intended to detect and correct fatigue cracking in the transition and pick-up angles of the lower part of the center fuselage, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing-fuselage support and fuselage pressure vessel.

**DATES:** Effective July 14, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director

of the Federal Register as of July 14, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**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:** A

proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Airbus Model A320-111, -11, and -231 series airplanes was published in the **Federal Register** on November 19, 1997 (62 FR 61704). That action proposed to require repetitive inspections for cracking in the transition and pick-up angles in the lower part of the center fuselage area, and corrective action, if necessary. That action also proposed to provide for an optional terminating modification for the repetitive inspection requirements.

**Comments**

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the comments received.

Two commenters support the proposed rule.

One commenter supports the intent of the proposed rule, but identifies a redundancy that appears in paragraph (a)(2)(i)(A) of the proposed AD. The commenter notes that the repetitive inspection requirements of this paragraph specify accomplishment of both a visual and a rotating probe (eddy current) inspection, whereas the original requirement was only for an eddy current inspection. Since the eddy current inspection provides a greater detailed inspection than a visual inspection, the commenter states that the visual inspection should not be necessary. The FAA concurs and has revised paragraph (a)(2)(i)(A) of the final rule accordingly.

Additionally, paragraphs (a)(1)(i)(B), (a)(1)(ii), and (a)(2)(i)(B) of the final rule have been revised to cite only Revision 2 of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-

1027 for accomplishment of certain actions. Revision 2 contains no substantive differences from the original or Revision 1 of the service bulletin. A "NOTE" has been added to the final rule to give credit to operators who may have previously accomplished the required actions in accordance with these earlier versions of the service bulletin.

**Conclusion**

After careful review of the available data, including the comments noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule with the change previously described. The FAA has determined that this change will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

**Cost Impact**

The FAA estimates that 24 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD.

It will take approximately 9 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required inspections, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspections required by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$12,960, or \$540 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

It will take approximately 10 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required modification, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts will cost approximately \$2,895 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the modification required by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$83,880, or \$3,495 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the 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 adopted herein will 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 final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under

Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); 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. A final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

**List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

**Adoption of the Amendment**

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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:

**98-12-18 Airbus Industrie:** Amendment 39-10573. Docket 96-NM-184-AD.

**Applicability:** Model A320-111, -211, and -231 series airplanes, manufacturer's serial numbers 002 through 008 inclusive, 010 through 014 inclusive, 016 through 078 inclusive, and 080 through 107 inclusive; 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 (b) 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 detect and correct reduced structural integrity of the wing-fuselage support and fuselage pressure vessel resulting from

structural fatigue cracking in the transition and pick-up angles, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 16,000 total landings, or within 6 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, accomplish paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this AD, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1028, dated March 1, 1994.

(1) Perform a visual inspection to detect cracks of the transition angle, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(i) If no crack is detected during the visual inspection required by paragraph (a)(1) of this AD, accomplish either paragraph (a)(1)(i)(A) or paragraph (a)(1)(i)(B) of this AD.

(A) Repeat the visual inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 12,000 landings. Or

(B) Prior to further flight, modify the center fuselage in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1027, Revision 2, dated June 8, 1995. Accomplishment of the modification constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (a)(1)(i)(A) of this AD.

(ii) If any crack is detected during the visual inspection required by paragraph (a)(1) of this AD, prior to further flight, replace the transition angle with a new transition angle, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1027, Revision 2, dated June 8, 1995.

(2) Perform a rotating probe inspection to detect cracks of the pick-up angle, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(i) If no crack is detected during the rotating probe inspection required by paragraph (a)(2) of this AD, accomplish either paragraph (a)(2)(i)(A) or (a)(2)(i)(B) of this AD.

(A) Repeat the rotating probe inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 12,000 landings. Or

(B) Prior to further flight, modify the center fuselage in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1027, Revision 2, dated June 8, 1995. Accomplishment of the modification constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (a)(2)(i)(A) of this AD.

(ii) If any crack is detected and it is less than 1.9 mm in length, prior to further flight, accomplish the applicable corrective actions specified in the service bulletin. For holes that have not been modified in accordance with the service bulletin, repeat the rotating probe inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 12,000 landings.

(iii) If any crack is detected and it is 1.9 mm or greater in length, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with the method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

**Note 2:** Accomplishment of the modification or replacement required by paragraph (a) of this AD in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1027, dated March 1, 1994, or Revision 1, dated September 5, 1994, prior to the effective date

of this AD, is acceptable for compliance with this paragraph.

(b) 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 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(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) The inspections shall be done in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1028, dated March 1, 1994. The modification and replacement shall be done in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1027, Revision 2, dated June 8, 1995. Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1027, Revision 2, dated June 8, 1995, contains the following list of effective pages:

Page No.	Revision level shown on page	Date shown on page
1-6, 8, 10-16, 19.	2 .....	June 8, 1995.
7, 17, 18, 20.	Original ..	March 1, 1994.
9 .....	1 .....	September 5, 1994.

This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**Note 4:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 95-097-065(B), dated May 24, 1995.

(e) This amendment becomes effective on July 14, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 2, 1998.

**Darrell M. Pederson,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
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