

**Note 5:** An NDT inspection is also required by AD 98-25-07, amendment 39-10933, to be repetitively performed on Model A300 B4-600 and A300 B4-600R series airplanes on which Airbus Modification 10453 has not been installed. For those airplanes, if the inspection is done within the applicable compliance time specified by paragraph (c) of this AD, the threshold for the initial inspection of paragraph (b) of this AD may be extended by 1,500 flight cycles.

#### Corrective Actions

(d) If any cracking is found during any inspection required by paragraph (b) of this AD: Except as required by paragraph (f) of this AD, prior to further flight, perform all applicable corrective actions in accordance with the applicable service bulletin identified in Table 1 of this AD.

#### Terminating Action

(e) Accomplishment of the applicable modification specified by paragraph (e)(1) or (e)(2) of this AD terminates the requirements of this AD.

(1) For Model A300 B4-600 and A300 B4-600R series airplanes: Perform the modification in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6053, Revision 1, dated October 31, 1995; or Revision 02, dated June 2, 1999.

(2) For Model A300 B2 and A300 B4 series airplanes: Perform the modification in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-53-0297, Revision 2, dated October 31, 1995.

#### Exceptions to Service Bulletin Instructions

(f) During any inspection required by this AD, if the service bulletin specifies to contact the manufacturer for an appropriate action: Prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA; or the Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC) (or its delegated agent).

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(g) 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 6:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

#### Special Flight Permits

(h) 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 7:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 1998-481-270(B) R1, dated July 12, 2000.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 15, 2001.

**Vi L. Lipski,**

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 01-21106 Filed 8-21-01; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2001-CE-24-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Pilatus Aircraft Ltd. Models PC-12 and PC-12/45 Airplanes

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

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to all Pilatus Aircraft Ltd. (Pilatus) Models PC-12 and PC-12/45 airplanes. The proposed AD would require you to inspect the cargo doors to identify front and rear end frames with plain lightening holes and install reinforcing plates on any frame with plain lightening holes. The proposed AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for Switzerland. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent cracking at the edges of the unflanged lightening holes, which could result in major structural damage to the airplane. Such damage could result in possible loss of control of the airplane.

**DATES:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) must receive any comments on this proposed rule on or before September 21, 2001.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001-CE-24-AD, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. Comments may be inspected at this location between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted.

Service information that applies to the proposed AD may be obtained from Pilatus Aircraft Ltd., Customer Liaison Manager, CH-6371 Stans, Switzerland; telephone: +41 41 619 63 19; facsimile: +41 41 619 6224; or from Pilatus Business Aircraft Ltd., Product Support Department, 11755 Airport Way,

Broomfield, Colorado 80021; telephone: (303) 465-9099; facsimile: (303) 465-6040. This information also may be examined at the Rules Docket at the address above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Doug Rudolph, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329-4059; facsimile: (816) 329-4090.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Comments Invited

*How do I comment on the proposed AD?* The FAA invites comments on this proposed rule. You may submit whatever written data, views, or arguments you choose. You need to include the rule's docket number and submit your comments in triplicate to the address specified under the caption **ADDRESSES**. The FAA will consider all comments received on or before the closing date. We may amend the proposed rule in light of comments received. Factual information that supports your ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed AD action and determining whether we need to take additional rulemaking action.

*Are there any specific portions of the proposed AD I should pay attention to?* The FAA specifically invites comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule that might suggest a need to modify the rule. You may examine all comments we receive before and after the closing date of the rule in the Rules Docket. We will file a report in the Rules Docket that summarizes each FAA contact with the public that concerns the substantive parts of the proposed AD.

We are re-examining the writing style we currently use in regulatory documents, in response to the Presidential memorandum of June 1, 1998. That memorandum requires federal agencies to communicate more clearly with the public. We are interested in your comments on whether the style of this document is clear, and any other suggestions you might have to improve the clarity of FAA communications that affect you. You can get more information about the Presidential memorandum and the plain language initiative at <http://www.plainlanguage.gov>.

*How can I be sure FAA receives my comment?* If you want us to acknowledge the receipt of your comments, you must include a self-addressed, stamped postcard. On the postcard, write "Comments to Docket

No. 2001-CE-24-AD." We will date stamp and mail the postcard back to you.

**Discussion**

*What events have caused this proposed AD?* The Federal Office for Civil Aviation (FOCA), which is the airworthiness authority for Switzerland, recently notified FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Pilatus Models PC-12 and PC-12/45 airplanes. The FOCA reports that, during production, some PC-12 and PC-12/45 airplanes were equipped with cargo doors that do not have reinforcing flanges on the lightening holes in the front and rear end of the cargo door frames.

*What are the consequences if the condition is not corrected?* If not detected and corrected, cracking at the edges of the unflanged lightening holes could result in major structural damage to the airplane. Such damage could result in possible loss of control of the airplane.

*Is there service information that applies to this subject?* Pilatus has issued Service Bulletin No. 52-004, dated April 20, 2001.

*What are the provisions of this service bulletin?* The service bulletin includes procedures for:

- Inspecting the cargo doors to identify front and rear end frames with plain lightening holes; and
- Installing reinforcing plates on any frame with plain lightening holes.

*What action did FOCA take?* The FOCA classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued Swiss AD Number HB 2001-389, dated June 25, 2001, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in Switzerland.

*Was this in accordance with the bilateral airworthiness agreement?* These airplane models are manufactured in Switzerland and are 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 FOCA has kept FAA informed of the situation described above.

**The FAA's Determination and an Explanation of the Provisions of the Proposed AD**

*What has FAA decided?* The FAA has examined the findings of the FOCA; reviewed all available information, including the service information referenced above; and determined that:

- The unsafe condition referenced in this document exists or could develop on other Pilatus PC-12 and PC-12/45 airplanes of the same type design;
- The actions specified in the previously-referenced service information should be accomplished on the affected airplanes; and
- AD action should be taken in order to correct this unsafe condition.

*What would the proposed AD require?* This proposed AD would require you to incorporate the actions in the previously-referenced service bulletin.

The Swiss AD and the manufacturer's service information applies to manufacturer serial numbers (MSN) 301 through 370 and all part-number (P/N) 552.30.12.051 and P/N 552.30.12.052, held as spares. We are expanding the applicability of this proposed AD to all serial numbered airplanes. We are expanding the inspection and installation actions to cover MSN 101 through MSN 370, instead of MSN 301 through MSN 370, because these cargo doors may have been installed on MSN 101 through MSN 370 through field approval or other methods. Since cargo doors, part-number P/N 552.30.12.051 and P/N 552.30.12.052, held as spares, may be installed on airplanes not covered by the applicability of the service information, the cargo doors on all serial numbered airplanes would have to be inspected and modified if necessary, prior to installation.

**Cost Impact**

*How many airplanes would the proposed AD impact?* We estimate that the proposed AD affects 230 airplanes in the U.S. registry.

*What would be the cost impact of the proposed AD on owners/operators of the affected airplanes?* We estimate the following costs to accomplish the proposed inspection:

Labor cost	Parts cost	Total cost per airplane	Total cost on U.S. operators
1 workhour × \$60 per hour = \$60 .....	No parts required for the inspection .....	\$60	\$13,800.

We estimate the following costs to accomplish any necessary modifications that would be required based on the

results of the proposed inspection. We have no way of determining the number

of airplanes that may need such modification:

Labor cost	Parts cost	Total cost per airplane
2 workhours × \$60 per hour = \$120 .....	Provided by the manufacturer free of charge .....	\$120.

**Regulatory Impact**

*Would this proposed AD impact various entities?* The regulations proposed herein would 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. Therefore, it is determined that this proposed rule

would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

*Would this proposed AD involve a significant rule or regulatory action?* For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed 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) 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 has been placed 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, under 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. FAA amends § 39.13 by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

**Pilatus Aircraft Ltd.:** Docket No. 2001–CE–24–AD

(a) *What airplanes are affected by this AD?* This AD affects Models PC–12 and PC–12/45 airplanes, all serial numbers, that are certificated in any category.

(b) *Who must comply with this AD?* Anyone who wishes to operate any of the above airplanes must comply with this AD.

(c) *What problem does this AD address?* The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent cracking at the edges of the unflanged lightening holes, which could result in major structural damage to the airplane. Such damage could result in possible loss of control of the airplane.

(d) *What actions must I accomplish to address this problem?* To address this problem, you must accomplish the following:

Actions	Compliance	Procedures
(1) For manufacturer serial numbers (MSN) 101 through 370, inspect the front and rear frames of the cargo door for lightening holes with plain rims.	Within the next 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD.	In accordance the with Accomplishment Instructions section of Pilatus Service Bulletin No. 52–004, dated April 20, 2001.
(2) If, during the inspection required in paragraph (d)(1) of this AD, a plain rim is found, install a reinforcing plate.	Prior to further flight after the inspection required in paragraph (d)(1) of this AD.	In accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions section of Pilatus Service Bulletin No. 52–004, dated April 20, 2001.
(3) For all serial numbered airplanes, do not install any cargo door, part-number (P/N) 552.30.12.051 or P/N 552.30.12.052 (or FAA-approved equivalent part number), unless it is has been inspected as required in paragraph (d)(1) of this AD and modified as required in paragraph (d)(2) of this AD.	As of the effective date of this AD .....	In accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions section of Pilatus Service Bulletin No. 52–004, dated April 20, 2001.

(e) *Can I comply with this AD in any other way?* You may use an alternative method of compliance or adjust the compliance time if:

- (1) Your alternative method of compliance provides an equivalent level of safety; and
- (2) The Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, approves your alternative. Submit your request through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate.

**Note 1:** This AD applies to each airplane identified in paragraph (a) of this AD, 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 (e) 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 you have not eliminated the unsafe condition, specific actions you propose to address it.

(f) *Where can I get information about any already-approved alternative methods of compliance?* Contact Doug Rudolph, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329–4059; facsimile: (816) 329–4090.

(g) *What if I need to fly the airplane to another location to comply with this AD?* The FAA can issue a special flight permit under sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate your airplane to a location where you can accomplish the requirements of this AD.

(h) *How do I get copies of the documents referenced in this AD?* You may obtain copies of the documents referenced in this AD from Pilatus Aircraft Ltd., Customer Liaison Manager, CH–6371 Stans, Switzerland; or from Pilatus Business Aircraft Ltd., Product Support Department, 11755 Airport Way, Broomfield, Colorado 80021. You may examine these documents at FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

**Note 2:** The subject of this AD is addressed in Swiss AD HB 2001–389, dated June 25, 2001.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on August 16, 2001.

**Michael K. Dahl,**  
*Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate,*  
*Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 01–21140 Filed 8–21–01; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–13–P**

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**38 CFR Part 3**  
**RIN 2900–AK03**

**State Department as Agent of Department of Veterans Affairs**

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.  
**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes to amend the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regulation that authorizes

diplomatic and consular officers of the State Department to act as agents of VA. The intended effect of this amendment is to present the existing regulation in “plain language”.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before October 22, 2001.

**ADDRESSES:** Mail or hand deliver written comments to: Director, Office of Regulations Management (02D), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Ave., NW, Room 1154, Washington, DC 20420; or fax comments to (202) 273–9289; or e-mail comments to [OGCRegulations@mail.va.gov](mailto:OGCRegulations@mail.va.gov). Comments should indicate that they are submitted in response to “RIN 2900–AK03”. All comments received will be available for public inspection at the above address in the Office of Regulations Management, Room 1158, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Bob White, Team Leader, Plain Language Regulations Project, Veterans Benefits Administration, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Telephone: 202/273–7228 (this is not a toll-free number).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** VA proposes to rewrite 38 CFR 3.108 in plain language. This regulation authorizes diplomatic and consular officers of the State Department to act as agents of VA. It is currently located in