

Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2005-21861; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-093-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320-111 Airplanes, and Model A320-200 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Model A320-111 airplanes, and Model A320-200 series airplanes. This proposed AD would require installing a bonding strip between each of the two water scavenge jet pumps of the center fuel tank and the rear spar in section 21. This proposed AD is prompted by the results of fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer. We are proposing this AD to prevent an ignition source for fuel vapor in the wing, which could result in fire or explosion in the center wing fuel tank.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by August 18, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Use one of the following addresses to submit comments on this proposed AD.

- DOT Docket Web site: Go to <http://dms.dot.gov> and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- Government-wide rulemaking Web site: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- Mail: Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Nassif Building, room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590.
- By fax: (202) 493-2251.

- Hand Delivery: Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Airbus, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France.

You can examine the contents of this AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>, or in person at the Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., room PL-401, on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, Washington, DC. This docket number is FAA-2005-21861; the directorate identifier for this docket is 2005-NM-093-AD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2125; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to submit any relevant written data, views, or arguments regarding this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under **ADDRESSES**. Include "Docket No. FAA-2005-21861; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-093-AD" at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed AD. We will consider all comments submitted by the closing date and may amend the proposed AD in light of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://dms.dot.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed AD. Using the search function of our docket Web site, anyone can find and read the comments in any of our dockets, including the name of the individual who sent the comment (or signed the comment on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You can review the DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR

19477-78), or you can visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Examining the Docket

You can examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>, or in person at the Docket Management Facility office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Docket Management Facility office (telephone (800) 647-5227) is located on the plaza level of the Nassif Building at the DOT street address stated in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after the Docket Management System (DMS) receives them.

Discussion

We have examined the underlying safety issues involved in recent fuel tank explosions on several large transport airplanes, including the adequacy of existing regulations, the service history of airplanes subject to those regulations, and existing maintenance practices for fuel tank systems. As a result of those findings, we issued a regulation titled "Transport Airplane Fuel Tank System Design Review, Flammability Reduction and Maintenance and Inspection Requirements" (67 FR 23086, May 7, 2001). In addition to new airworthiness standards for transport airplanes and new maintenance requirements, this rule included Special Federal Aviation Regulation No. 88 ("SFAR 88," Amendment 21-78, and subsequent Amendments 21-82 and 21-83).

Among other actions, SFAR 88 requires certain type design (*i.e.*, type certificate (TC) and supplemental type certificate (STC)) holders to substantiate that their fuel tank systems can prevent ignition sources in the fuel tanks. This requirement applies to type design holders for large turbine-powered transport airplanes and for subsequent modifications to those airplanes. It requires them to perform design reviews and to develop design changes and maintenance procedures if their designs do not meet the new fuel tank safety standards. As explained in the preamble to the rule, we intended to adopt airworthiness directives to mandate any changes found necessary to address unsafe conditions identified as a result of these reviews.

In evaluating these design reviews, we have established four criteria intended

to define the unsafe conditions associated with fuel tank systems that require corrective actions. The percentage of operating time during which fuel tanks are exposed to flammable conditions is one of these criteria. The other three criteria address the failure types under evaluation: single failures, single failures in combination with another latent condition(s), and in-service failure experience. For all four criteria, the evaluations included consideration of previous actions taken that may mitigate the need for further action.

The Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) has issued a regulation that is similar to SFAR 88. (The JAA is an associated body of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) representing the civil aviation regulatory authorities of a number of European States who have agreed to co-operate in developing and implementing common safety regulatory standards and procedures.) Under this regulation, the JAA stated that all members of the ECAC that hold type certificates for transport category airplanes are required to conduct a design review against explosion risks.

We have determined that the actions identified in this proposed AD are necessary to reduce the potential of ignition sources inside fuel tanks, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in fuel tank explosions and consequent loss of the airplane.

The Direction Generale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified us that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Airbus Model A320-111 airplanes, and Model A320-200 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that a design review showed that the two water scavenge jet pumps of the center fuel tank and the rear spar in section 21 are not electrically bonded. If a bonding strip is not installed between each of the scavenge jet pumps and the rear spar, an ignition source could be provided for fuel vapor in the wing and cause fire or explosion in the center fuel tank.

Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A320-28-1067, Revision 02, dated January 27, 1997. The service bulletin describes procedures for installing a bonding strip between each of the two water scavenge jet pumps of the center fuel tank and the rear spar in section 21. Accomplishing the actions specified in the service information is intended to adequately address the unsafe condition. The DGAC mandated the service information and issued French airworthiness directive F-2005-056,

dated April 13, 2005, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of the Proposed AD

These airplane models are manufactured in France 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 DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. We have examined the DGAC's findings, evaluated all pertinent information, and determined that we need to issue an AD for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Therefore, we are proposing this AD, which would require accomplishing the actions described previously, except as discussed under "Difference Between French Airworthiness Directive and This Proposed AD."

Difference Between French Airworthiness Directive and This Proposed AD

The applicability of French Airworthiness Directive F-2005-056 excludes airplanes on which Airbus Service Bulletin A320-28-1067, Revision 02, has been accomplished in service. However, we have not excluded those airplanes in the applicability of this proposed AD; rather, this proposed AD includes a requirement to accomplish the actions specified in that service bulletin. This requirement would ensure that the actions specified in the service bulletin and required by this proposed AD are accomplished on all affected airplanes. Operators must continue to operate the airplane in the configuration required by this proposed AD unless an alternative method of compliance is approved.

Costs of Compliance

This proposed AD would affect about 371 airplanes of U.S. registry. The proposed actions would take about 1 work hour per airplane, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Required parts would be supplied by the manufacturer at no charge. Based on these figures, the estimated cost of the proposed AD for U.S. operators is \$24,115, or \$65 per airplane.

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.

We are 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

We have determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that the 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. 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.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD. See the **ADDRESSES** section for a location to examine the regulatory evaluation.

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 FAA proposes to amend 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 (AD):

Airbus: Docket No. FAA-2005-21861;
Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-093-AD.

Comments Due Date

(a) The Federal Aviation Administration must receive comments on this AD action by August 18, 2005.

Affected ADs

(b) None.

Applicability

(c) This AD applies to Airbus Model A320-111, -211, -212, -214, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes, certificated in any category; except those airplanes on which Airbus Modification 25513 has been accomplished in production.

Unsafe Condition

(d) This AD was prompted by the results of fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer. We are issuing this AD to prevent an ignition source for fuel vapor in the wing, which could result in fire or explosion in the adjacent wing fuel tank.

Compliance

(e) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

Installation of Bonding Strips

(f) Within 56 months after the effective date of this AD, install a bonding strip between each of the two water scavenge jet pumps of the center fuel tank and the rear spar in section 21, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-28-1067, Revision 02, dated January 27, 1997.

Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(g) The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested in accordance with the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19.

Related Information

(h) French airworthiness directive F-2005-056, dated April 13, 2005, also addresses the subject of this AD.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on July 22, 2005.

Ali Bahrami,

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Airframe Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 05-14171 Filed 7-18-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2005-21862; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-091-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320-111 Airplanes; and Model A320-200, A321-100, and A321-200 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Model A320-111 airplanes; and Model A320-200, A321-100, and A321-200 series airplanes. This proposed AD would require installing a bonding lead between the low pressure valve and the adjacent pipe assembly in each wing. This proposed AD is prompted by the results of fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer. We are proposing this AD to prevent an ignition source for fuel vapor in the wing, which could result in fire or explosion in the adjacent wing fuel tank.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by August 18, 2005.

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SW., room PL-401, on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, Washington, DC. This docket number is FAA-2005-21862; the directorate identifier for this docket is 2005-NM-091-AD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2125; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

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Discussion

We have examined the underlying safety issues involved in recent fuel