Proposed Rules

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


RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2014–08–02 for certain Airbus Model A300 B4–600 and A300 B4–600R series airplanes. AD 2014–08–02 requires modifying the profile of stringer run-outs of both wings, including a high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection of the fastener holes for defects, and repairs if necessary. Since we issued AD 2014–08–02, further analysis in the context of widespread fatigue damage (WFD) concluded that a shorter compliance time is necessary to meet specified requirements to address WFD. This proposed AD would retain the actions required by AD 2014–08–02 and would revise the compliance times. We are proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by April 27, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

• Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
• Fax: 202–493–2251.
• Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this NPRM, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAW, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email account.airworth–eas@airbus.com; Internet: http://www.airbus.com. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425–227–1221.

Exercising the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2016–9572; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone 800–647–5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA–2016–9572; Directorate Identifier 2016–NM–151–AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to http://www.regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

Fatigue damage can occur locally, in small areas or structural design details, or globally, in widespread areas. Multiple-site damage is widespread damage that occurs in a large structural element such as a single rivet line of a lap splice joining two large skin panels. Widespread damage can also occur in multiple elements such as adjacent frames or stringers. Multiple-site damage and multiple-element damage cracks are typically too small initially to be reliably detected with normal inspection methods. Without intervention, these cracks will grow, and eventually compromise the structural integrity of the airplane. This condition is known as widespread fatigue damage. It is associated with general degradation of large areas of structure with similar structural details and stress levels. As an airplane ages, WFD will likely occur, and will certainly occur if the airplane is operated long enough without any intervention.

The FAA’s WFD final rule (75 FR 69746, November 15, 2010) became effective on January 14, 2011. The WFD rule requires certain actions to prevent structural failure due to WFD throughout the operational life of certain existing transport category airplanes and all of these airplanes that will be certificated in the future. For existing and future airplanes subject to the WFD rule, the rule requires that design approval holders (DAHs) establish a limit of validity (LOV) of the engineering data that support the structural maintenance program. Operators affected by the WFD rule may not fly an airplane beyond its LOV, unless an extended LOV is approved.

The WFD rule (75 FR 69746, November 15, 2010) does not require identifying and developing maintenance actions if the DAHs can show that such actions are not necessary to prevent WFD before the airplane reaches the LOV. Many LOVs, however, do depend on accomplishment of future maintenance actions. As stated in the WFD rule, any maintenance actions necessary to reach the LOV will be mandated by airworthiness directives through separate rulemaking actions.

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In the context of WFD, this action is necessary to enable DAHs to propose LOVs that allow operators the longest operational lives for their airplanes, and still ensure that WFD will not occur. This approach allows for an implementation strategy that provides flexibility to DAHs in determining the timing of service information development (with FAA approval), while providing operators with certainty regarding the LOV applicable to their airplanes.

On April 2, 2014, we issued AD 2014–08–02, Amendment 39–17826 (79 FR 21392, April 16, 2014) (“AD 2014–08–02”), for certain Airbus Model A300 B4–600 and A300 B4–600R series airplanes. AD 2014–08–02 was prompted by reports of cracks found in certain bottom wing skin stringers during full-scale fatigue testing and in service. AD 2014–08–02 requires modifying the profile of stringer run-outs of both wings, including a high frequency eddy current inspection of the fastener holes for defects, and repairs if necessary. We issued AD 2014–08–02 to prevent cracking in the bottom wing skin stringers, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the wings.

Since we issued AD 2014–08–02, further analysis in the context of WFD concluded that a shorter compliance time is necessary to meet specified requirements to address WFD.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2016–0174, dated August 30, 2016 (referred to after this as the “Airworthiness Directives under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.”

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:
§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2014–08–02, Amendment 39–17826 (79 FR 21392, April 16, 2014), and adding the following new AD:


(a) Comments Due Date
We must receive comments by April 27, 2017.

(b) Affected ADs
This AD replaces AD 2014–08–02, Amendment 39–17826 (79 FR 21392, April 16, 2014) (“AD 2014–08–02”).

(c) Applicability
This AD applies to Airbus Model A300–B4–601, B4–603, B4–620, and B4–622 airplanes, and Model A300–B4–605R and B4–622R airplanes, certificated in any category, except airplanes on which Airbus Modification 10324 or 10325 has been embodied in production.

(d) Subject
Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

(e) Reason
This AD was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder (DAH) indicating that the wing skin stringers are subject to widespread fatigue damage (WFD). We are issuing this AD to prevent cracking in the bottom wing skin stringers, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the wings.

(f) Compliance
Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Retained Modification of Rib 14, With Revised Compliance Time and Service Information
This paragraph restates the requirements of paragraph (g) of AD 2014–08–02, with revised compliance time and service information. At the time specified in paragraph (g)(1) or (g)(2) of this AD, whichever occurs earlier, modify the profile of stringer run-outs at rib 14 of both wings, including a high frequency eddy current inspection of the fastener holes for defects and all applicable repairs, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin B300–57–6046, Revision 02, dated June 21, 2013; or Revision 03, including Appendix 01, dated February 4, 2015, may be used.

1. Before the accumulation of 42,500 total flight cycles, or within 2,000 flight cycles after May 21, 2014 (the effective date of AD 2014–08–02), whichever occurs later.

2. Before the accumulation of 30,000 total flight cycles, or within 2,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(h) Retained Exception to the Service Information, With Revised Service Information
This paragraph restates the requirements of paragraph (h) of AD 2014–08–02, with revised service information.

1. Where Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin B300–57–6046, Revision 02, dated June 21, 2013, specifies to contact Airbus for repair instructions, this AD requires contacting the Manager, ANM–116, International Branch, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) (or its delegated agent) for repair instructions and doing those repairs before further flight.

2. Where Airbus Service Bulletin B300–57–6046, Revision 03, including Appendix 01, dated February 4, 2015, specifies to contact Airbus for appropriate action: Before further flight, accomplish corrective actions in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j)(2) of this AD.

(i) Credit for Previous Actions
This paragraph provides credit for actions required by paragraph (g) of this AD, if those actions were performed before the effective date of this AD using the service information specified in paragraph (j)(1), (j)(2), or (j)(3) of this AD.

1. Airbus Service Bulletin B300–57–6046, Revision 01, dated April 18, 2011, which is not incorporated by reference in this AD.

2. Airbus Service Bulletin B300–57–6046, dated January 18, 1994, which is not incorporated by reference in this AD.


(j) Other FAA AD Provisions
The following provisions also apply to this AD:

1. Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, Transport Airplane Directorate, 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 local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Branch, send it to ATTN: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM–116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057–3356; telephone 425–227–2125; fax 425–227–1149. Information may be emailed to: 9-AMN-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

2. Contacting the Manufacturer: As of the effective date of this AD, for any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or Airbus’s EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(k) Related Information

1. Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2016–0174, dated August 30, 2016, for related information. This MCAI may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2016–0972.

2. For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office—EAW, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email account.airworth-eas@airbus.com; Internet: http://www.airbus.com. You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425–227–1221.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 12, 2017.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 71


Proposed Establishment of Class E Airspace, Sacramento, CA

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This action proposes to establish Class E en route airspace extending upward from 1,200 feet above the surface to accommodate Instrument