DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39


RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics (Formerly Known as Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems) Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics Model SAAB 2000 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports that certain fuel probes indicated misleading fuel quantities on the engine indicating and crew alerting system (EICAS). This proposed AD would require a functional check of certain fuel probes, and replacement with a serviceable part if necessary. We are proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by January 10, 2019.

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 Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics, SE–581 88, Linkoping, Sweden; telephone +46 13 18 5591; fax +46 13 18 4874; email saab2000.techsupport@saabgroup.com; internet http://www.saabgroup.com.

You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

Examing 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–2018–0964; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (phone: 800–647–5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Shahram Daneshmandi, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206–231–3220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA–2018–0964; Product Identifier 2018–NM–127–AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this NPRM. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this NPRM because of 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 NPRM.

Discussion

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2018–0187, dated August 29, 2018 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for all Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics Model SAAB 2000 airplanes. The MCAI states:

Occurences were reported that certain fuel probes, installed on SAAB 2000 aeroplanes, indicated misleading fuel quantities on the engine indicating and crew alerting system (EICAS). The investigation results suggest that this may be an ageing phenomenon, leading to deteriorated capacity of the fuel probes.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to incorrect fuel reading, possibly resulting in fuel starvation and uncommanded engine in-flight shutdown, with consequent reduced control of the aeroplane.

To address this potential unsafe condition, SAAB issued the SB [service bulletin] to provide instructions for a functional check.

For the reason described above, this [EASA] AD requires a one-time functional check of the fuel quantity system and the fuel low level EICAS warnings to determine whether any affected parts are out of tolerance and, depending on findings, replacement of those affected parts.


Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics has issued Service Bulletin 2000–28–028, dated April 19, 2018. This service information describes procedures for a functional check of the fuel indicator gauging accuracy and the low level warning, and for replacing the affected part with a serviceable part if necessary. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

FAA’s Determination

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Proposed Requirements of This NPRM

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information described previously.

Difference Between MCAI and Proposed AD

The MCAI requires corrective actions if a functional check reveals that any fuel indicator value is out of tolerance, according to the limits and conditions specified in the Master Minimum Equipment List (MMEL). This proposed AD does not refer to the MMEL because operators are required by 14 CFR part 91 to have a Minimum Equipment List (MEL) to operate with inoperable equipment, and the acceptable limits and conditions for the fuel indicator values cannot be in an MEL without
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 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.

This proposed AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

We 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 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);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and
4. 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.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39
Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, 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):
SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for MD Helicopter Model 369A, 369D, 369E, 369FF, 369H, 369HE, 369HM, 369HS, 500N, and 600N helicopters. This proposed AD would require inspecting each main rotor blade (MRB) for a crack. This proposed AD is prompted by reports of cracked MRBs. The actions of this proposed AD are intended to address an unsafe condition on these helicopters.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by January 25, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Docket: Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- Fax: 202–493–2251
- Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket
You may examine the AD docket on the internet at www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0991; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (telephone 800–647–5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Galib Abumeri, Aviation Safety Engineer, Los Angeles ACO Branch, Compliance and Airworthiness Division, FAA, 3960 Paramount Blvd., Lakewood, California 90712; telephone (562) 627–5374; email galib.abumeri@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments Invited
We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should suppress only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or