



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2016-6144; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-088-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM); extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: This document announces an extension of the comment period for the above-referenced NPRM, which proposed the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Model A318, A319, and A320 series airplanes; Model A330-200, -200 Freighter, and -300 series airplanes; and Model A340-200, -300, -500, and -600 series airplanes. That NPRM invited comments concerning the proposed requirement to modify the fuel quantity indicating system (FQIS) to prevent development of an ignition source inside the center fuel tank due to electrical fault conditions. This extension of the comment period is necessary to provide all interested persons an opportunity to present their views on the proposed requirements of that NPRM.

DATES: We must receive comments on the NPRM by September 19, 2016.

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.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above 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 <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2016-6144; 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 the proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: 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.

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-2016-6144; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-028-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 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 proposed AD.

Discussion

We issued an NPRM to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Airbus Model A318, A319, and A320 series airplanes; Model A330-200, -200 Freighter, and -300 series airplanes; and Model A340-200, -300, -500, and -600 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on May 3, 2016 (81 FR 26487) (“the NPRM”). The NPRM proposed to require modifying the fuel quantity indicating system (FQIS) to prevent development of an ignition source inside the center fuel tank due to electrical fault conditions.

The NPRM invited comments on regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposal.

The NPRM was prompted by fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer. The actions specified by the NPRM are intended to prevent ignition sources inside the center fuel tank, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the airplane.

Related Rulemaking

At the time we issued the NPRM, we issued five other NPRMs that also proposed to require modification of the FQIS:

- Docket No. FAA-2016-6139, Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-061-AD, for certain The Boeing Company Model 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, -900, and -900ER series airplanes.
- Docket No. FAA-2016-6140, Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-059-AD, for certain The Boeing Company Model 777 airplanes.

- Docket No. FAA-2016-6141, Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-048-AD, for certain The Boeing Company Model 767 airplanes.

- Docket No. FAA-2016-6143, Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-028-AD, for all Airbus Model A300 B4-600, B4-600R, and F4-600R series airplanes, and Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes (collectively called Model A300-600 series airplanes), and Model A310 series airplanes.

- Docket No. FAA-2016-6145, Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-056-AD, for certain The Boeing Company Model 747 airplanes.

Actions Since Previous NPRM was Issued

Since we issued the NPRM, we have received a request from Airlines for America (A4A) to extend the comment period. A4A stated that the NPRMs are controversial and could drive substantial costs, especially for cargo airlines. To be able to prepare informed and meaningful comments with coordinated consensus among its members, A4A requested a longer comment period to understand a number of factors, including related service information, data and safety analysis of the unsafe condition, and potential costs.

We agree with the request, and have determined that it is appropriate to extend the comment period for the NPRM to give all interested persons additional time to examine the proposed requirements and submit comments. We have determined that extending the comment period until September 19, 2016, will not compromise the safety of the affected airplanes.

The comment period for Docket No. FAA-2016-6144 closes September 19, 2016.

Because no other portion of the proposal or other regulatory information has been changed, the entire proposal is not being republished.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 8, 2016.

Michael Kaszycki,
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Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-14115 Filed: 6/14/2016 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/15/2016]