[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2019-0020; Product Identifier 2018-NM-144-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2018-19-18, which applies to certain Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-603, B4-620, and B4-622 airplanes; Model A300 B4-600R series airplanes; Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes; and Model A300 F4-605R airplanes. AD 2018-19-18 requires, depending on airplane configuration, a modification of certain angle fitting attachment holes; repetitive inspections for cracking of certain holes of the internal lower angle fitting web, certain holes of the internal lower angle fitting horizontal splicing, the aft bottom panel, and a certain junction area; and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. Since we issued AD 2018-19-18, we have determined that additional airplanes are affected by the unsafe condition. This proposed AD would retain the actions required by AD 2018-19-18, expand the applicability, and, for certain airplanes, would require repetitive inspections for cracking of certain holes of the center wing box (CWB) lower

angle fittings and the CWB lower panel, and corrective actions 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 [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

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: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For the incorporation by reference (IBR) material described in the "Related IBR material under 1 CFR part 51" section in SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION, contact European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 1000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at https://ad.easa.europa.eu. You may view this IBR material 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. It is also available in the AD docket on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov.

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-2019-0020; 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 (telephone 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 Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3225.

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-2019-0020; Product Identifier 2018-NM-144-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 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 NPRM.

Discussion

We issued AD 2018-19-18, Amendment 39-19418 (83 FR 49793, October 3, 2018) ("AD 2018-19-18"), for certain Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-603, B4-620, and B4-622 airplanes; Model A300 B4-600R series airplanes; Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes; and Model A300 F4-605R airplanes. AD 2018-19-18 requires, depending on airplane configuration, a modification of certain angle fitting attachment holes; repetitive inspections for cracking of certain holes of the internal lower angle fitting web, certain holes of the internal lower angle fitting horizontal splicing, the aft bottom panel, and a certain junction area; and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. AD 2018-19-18 resulted from reports of cracking on a certain frame (FR) angle fitting. We issued AD 2018-19-18 to address cracking of the FR47 angle fitting, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Actions Since AD 2018-19-18 Was Issued

We have determined that additional airplanes are affected by the unsafe condition. Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-622R and Model A300 F4-600R series airplanes that have

accomplished Airbus Modification 12171 and Airbus Modification 12249 need to be inspected in order to address the unsafe condition.

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2018-0229, dated October 23, 2018 ("EASA AD 2018-0229") (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or "the MCAI"), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-603, B4-620, B4-622, B4-605R, B4-622R, C4-605R Variant F, F4-605R, and F4-622R airplanes. The MCAI states:

> Prompted by cracks found on CWB FR47 angle fittings, Airbus issued SB [service bulletin] A300-57-6049, SB A300-57-6050, and SB A300-57-6086.
>
> These cracks, if not detected and corrected, could affect the structural integrity of the CWB of the aeroplane.
>
> Consequently, DGAC [Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile] France published AD 94-241-170, AD 1999-147-279, AD 2000-533-328 and AD F-2004-159 (EASA approval 2004-9779), each [DGAC France] AD superseding the previous one, to require repetitive high frequency eddy current (HFEC) rotating probe inspections of the FR47 internal lower angle fitting.
>
> After DGAC France AD F-2004-159 was issued, cracks were reportedly found on the horizontal flange of the FR47 internal corner angle fitting during accomplishment of routine maintenance structural inspection and modification in accordance with the instructions of Airbus SB A300-57-6050. Prompted by these findings, Airbus reviewed and amended the inspection programme for the internal lower angle fitting flange (horizontal face).
>
> Consequently, EASA issued AD 2012-0092 [which corresponds to FAA AD 2014-20-18, Amendment 39-17991 (79 FR 65879, November 6, 2014) ("AD 2014-20-18")] retaining the requirements of DGAC France AD F-2004-159, which was superseded, and requiring

additional repetitive inspections of the CWB lower panel through the ultrasonic method and, depending on findings, re-installation of removed fasteners in transition fit instead of interference. In addition, DGAC France had previously issued AD F-2005-124 (EASA approval 2005-6071) to require CWB FR47 angle fittings inspections for A300 F4-608ST aeroplanes, in accordance with Airbus SB A300-57-9001 and SB A300-57-9002.

Following the discovery of numerous cracks during the accomplishment of SB A300-57-6049 and SB A300-57-6086 inspections, Airbus developed in a first step a new (recommended) modification (Airbus SB A300-57-6113), defined associated inspections programme and methods (ultrasonic/radiographic), and published SB A300-57-6119. Consequently, EASA issued AD 2016-0198, retaining the requirements of EASA AD 2012-0092, which was superseded, to require repetitive inspections for post-SB A300-57-6113 aeroplanes.

After EASA AD 2016-0198 was issued, Airbus revised in a second step the inspection programme for A300-600 pre-SB A300-57-6113 and A300-600ST aeroplanes, reducing inspection thresholds and intervals. At this opportunity, the existing ultrasonic inspection of the CWB lower panel for A300-600 aeroplanes was added for A300-600ST aeroplanes. Consequently, EASA issued AD 2017-0210 [which corresponds to FAA AD 2018-19-18] retaining the requirements of EASA AD 2016-0198 for A300-600 aeroplanes and DGAC France AD F-2005-124 for A300-600ST aeroplanes, which were both superseded, to include these new requirements.

Since EASA AD 2017-0210 was issued, Airbus revised in a third step the inspection programme for A300-600 post-mod 12171 and post-mod 12249 reducing inspection thresholds and intervals, and introducing the CWB lower panel inspection. Airbus published SB A300-57-6121, superseding Airworthiness Limitation Items (ALI) tasks 571012 & 571014.

For the reason described above, this [EASA] AD retains the requirements of EASA AD 2017-0210, which is superseded, and expands the Applicability (Group 3) to include post-mod 12171 and post-mod 12249 aeroplanes.

Related IBR Material under 1 CFR part 51

EASA AD 2018-0229, dated October 23, 2018, describes procedures for a modification of the angle fitting attachment holes, an inspection of certain holes of the internal lower angle fitting web for cracking, an inspection of certain holes of the internal lower angle fitting horizontal splicing for cracking, an inspection of the aft bottom panel for cracking, an inspection of the FR47/Rib 1 junction area for cracking, an inspection of certain holes of the CWB lower angle fittings for cracking, an inspection of the CWB lower panel for cracking, and corrective actions. The corrective actions include a rotating probe inspection for cracking, replacing damaged fasteners, reaming and drilling holes, installing the next nominal fastener for oversized bore holes, and repairing cracks. This material 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 and it is publicly available through the EASA website.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of this Proposed AD

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 referenced above. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA worked with Airbus and EASA to develop a process to use certain EASA ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. As a result, EASA AD 2018-0229 will be incorporated by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with the provisions specified in EASA AD 2018-0229, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Service information specified in EASA AD 2018-0229 that is required for compliance with EASA AD 2018-0229 will be available on the Internet http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0020 after the FAA final rule is published.

Explanation of Retained Requirements

Although this proposed AD does not explicitly restate the requirements of AD 2018-19-18, this proposed AD would retain all of the requirements of AD 2018-19-18. Those requirements are referenced in EASA AD 2018-0229, which, in turn, is referenced in paragraph (g) of this proposed AD.

Differences between this Proposed AD and the MCAI

EASA AD 2018-0229 does not specify credit for actions previously performed with certain service information. However, this proposed AD allows for credit for actions required by paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2018-0229, if those actions were performed before December 19, 2005 (the effective date of FAA AD 2005-23-08, Amendment 39-14366 (70 FR 69056, November 14, 2005)) using Airbus Service Bulletin

A300-57-6050, Revision 02, dated February 10, 2000. We consider those methods to be adequate to address the modification of the angle fitting attachment holes on the left hand and right hand sides by cold expansion required by this proposed AD.

Relationship Between Proposed AD and AD 2014-20-18, Amendment 39-17991 (79 FR 65879, November 6, 2014) ("AD 2014-20-18")

Paragraph (o) of AD 2018-19-18 specifies that accomplishing certain actions terminates all requirements of AD 2014-20-18. Because this proposed AD will supersede AD 2018-19-18, this terminating action is retained in this proposed AD and instead refers to the accomplishment of the corresponding actions in EASA AD 2018-0229. Therefore, paragraph (i) of this proposed AD specifies that accomplishment of the modification required by paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2018-0229 and accomplishment of the initial inspections required by paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) of EASA AD 2018-0229 terminate all requirements of AD 2014-20-18.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 65 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

Estimated costs for required actions*

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Retained actions from AD 2018-19-18	Up to 727 work-hours X $85 per hour = $61,795	Up to $3,370	Up to $65,165	Up to $4,235,725
New proposed actions	242 work-hours X $85 per hour = $20,570	$100	$20,670	$1,343,550

*Table does not include estimated costs for reporting.

We estimate that it would take about 1 work-hour per product to comply with the proposed reporting requirement in this proposed AD. The average labor rate is $85 per hour. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of reporting the inspection results on U.S. operators to be $5,525, or $85 per product.

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

Paperwork Reduction Act

A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB control number. The control number for the collection of information required by this NPRM is 2120-0056. The paperwork cost associated with this NPRM has been detailed in the Costs of Compliance section of this document and includes time for reviewing instructions, as well as completing and reviewing the collection of information. Therefore, all reporting associated with this NPRM is mandatory. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden and suggestions for reducing the burden should be directed to the FAA at 800 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20591, ATTN: Information Collection Clearance Officer, AES-200.

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.

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 and associated appliances 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 removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2018-19-18, Amendment 39-19418 (83 FR 49793, October 3, 2018), and adding the following new AD:

Airbus SAS: Docket No. FAA-2019-0020; Product Identifier 2018-NM-144-AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

(1) This AD replaces AD 2018-19-18, Amendment 39-19418 (83 FR 49793, October 3, 2018) ("AD 2018-19-18").

(2) This AD affects AD 2014-20-18, Amendment 39-17991 (79 FR 65879, November 6, 2014) ("AD 2014-20-18").

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-603, B4-620, B4-622, B4-605R, B4-622R, C4-605R Variant F, F4-605R, and F4-622R airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2018-0229, dated October 23, 2018 ("EASA AD 2018-0229").

(d) Subject

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

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by reports of cracking on the frame (FR) 47 angle fitting. We are issuing this AD to address cracking of the FR47 angle fitting, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Requirements

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2018-0229.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2018-0229

(1) For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD: Where EASA AD 2018-0229 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) The "Remarks" section of EASA AD 2018-0229 does not apply to this AD.

(3) Where Note 1 of EASA AD 2018-0229 specifies the grace period to be counted from January 6, 2001, this AD requires the grace period to be counted from December 19, 2005 (the effective date of AD 2005-23-08, Amendment 39-14366 (70 FR 69056, November 14, 2005) ("AD 2005-23-08")).

(4) Where Note 2 and Note 4 of EASA AD 2018-0229 specify the grace period to be counted from November 7, 2017, without exceeding certain inspection thresholds and intervals, the grace period for this AD is within 12 months after November 7, 2018 (the effective date of AD 2018-19-18).

(5) Paragraph (11) of EASA AD 2018-0229 specifies to report all inspection results to Airbus. For this AD, report all inspection results to Airbus Service Bulletin Reporting Online Application on Airbus World (https://w3.airbus.com/) at the applicable time specified in paragraph (h)(5)(i) or (h)(5)(ii) of this AD. The report must include the inspection results, the method of inspection, the airplane serial number, and the number of flight cycles and flight hours on the airplane.

(i) If the inspection was done on or after the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the inspection.

(ii) If the inspection was done before the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the effective date of this AD.

(i) Terminating Action for AD 2014-20-18

Accomplishment of the action required by paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2018-0229 and the initial inspections required by paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) of EASA AD 2018-0229 terminates all requirements of AD 2014-20-18.

(j) Credit for Previous Actions

This paragraph provides credit for actions required by paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2018-0229, if those actions were performed before December 19, 2005 (the effective date of AD 2005-23-08) using Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6050, Revision 02, dated February 10, 2000.

(k) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, 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 Section, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (l)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov.

(i) 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.

(ii) AMOCs approved previously for AD 2018-19-18 are approved as AMOCs for the corresponding provisions of EASA AD 2018-0229 that are required by paragraph (g) of this AD.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC):* For any service information referenced in EASA AD 2018-0229 that contains RC procedures and tests: Except as required by paragraph (k)(2) of this AD, RC procedures and tests must be done to comply with this AD; any procedures or tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

(4) *Paperwork Reduction Act Burden Statement:* A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be

subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2120-0056. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be approximately 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are mandatory. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden and suggestions for reducing the burden should be directed to the FAA at: 800 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20591, Attn: Information Collection Clearance Officer, AES-200.

(l) Related Information

(1) For information about EASA AD 2018-0229, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 6017; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at https://ad.easa.europa.eu. You may view this EASA AD 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. EASA AD 2018-0229 may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0020.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3225.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on February 1, 2019.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Director,
System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 2019-02552 Filed: 2/14/2019 8:45 am; Publication Date: 2/15/2019]