



[4910-13-P]

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. FAA-2015-1277; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-155-AD]

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by fatigue testing that determined fatigue damage could appear on clips, shear webs, and angles at certain rear fuselage sections and certain frames. This proposed AD is intended to complete certain mandated programs intended to support the airplane reaching its limit of validity (LOV) of the engineering data that support the established structural maintenance program. This proposed AD would require replacing the clips, the shear webs, and angles, including doing all applicable related investigative actions, and repair if necessary. We are proposing this AD to prevent fatigue damage on the clips, shear webs, and angles, which could affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

**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, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Airbus, Airworthiness Office – EIAS, 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](mailto: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.

### **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-2015-1277; 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:** Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-1405; fax 425-227-1149.

**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-2015-1277; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-155-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**

As described in FAA Advisory Circular 120-104

([http://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory\\_Circular/120-104.pdf](http://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/120-104.pdf)), several programs have been developed to support initiatives that will ensure the continued airworthiness of aging airplane structure. The last element of those initiatives is the requirement to establish a limit of validity (LOV) of the engineering data that support the structural maintenance program under 14 CFR 26.21. This proposed AD is the result of an assessment of the previously established programs by the DAH during the process of establishing the LOV for Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. The actions specified in this proposed AD are necessary to complete certain programs to ensure the continued airworthiness of aging airplane structure and to support an airplane reaching its LOV.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2014-0177, dated July 25, 2014 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. The MCAI states:

During the A320 fatigue test campaign for Extended Service Goal (ESG), it was determined that fatigue damage could appear on the clips, shear webs and angles at rear fuselage section 19, on Frame (FR) 72 and FR74.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could affect the structural integrity of the aeroplane.

To address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus developed a modification, which has been published through Airbus Service Bulletin (SB) A320-53-1266 for in-service application to allow aeroplanes to operate up to the

new ESG limit.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires replacement of the affected clips, shear webs and angles at rear fuselage section 19, FR72 and FR74 [including all applicable related investigative actions and repair if any cracking is found] .

Related investigative actions include rotating probe testing for cracking of the fastener holes and high frequency eddy current inspections for cracking of the stringers. You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2015-1277.

**Related Service Information under 1 CFR part 51**

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A320-53-1266, Revision 01, dated June 20, 2013. This service information describes procedures for replacing clips, shear webs, and angles at rear fuselage section 19, FR72 and FR74. The actions described in this service information are intended to correct the unsafe condition identified in the MCAI. 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 of this NPRM.

**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 and service information 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 these same type designs.

## **Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 44 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We also estimate that it would take about 110 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this proposed AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of this proposed AD on U.S. operators to be \$411,400, or \$9,350 per product.

We have received no definitive data on the costs of required parts.

According to the manufacturer, some of the costs of this proposed AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected individuals. We do not control warranty coverage for affected individuals. As a result, we have included all costs in our cost estimate.

## **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 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):

**Airbus:** Docket No. FAA-2015-1277; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-155-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**

None.

#### **(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to the airplanes identified in paragraphs (c)(1), (c)(2), and (c)(3) of this AD, certificated in any category, all manufacturer serial numbers, except those on which Airbus Modification 30975 has been embodied in production.

(1) Airbus Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes.

(2) Airbus Model A320-211, -212, -214, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes.

(3) Airbus Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by fatigue testing that determined fatigue damage could appear on clips, shear webs, and angles at certain rear fuselage sections and certain frames. This AD is intended to complete certain mandated programs intended to support the airplane reaching its limit of validity (LOV) of the engineering data that support the established structural maintenance program. We are issuing this AD to prevent fatigue damage on the clips, shear webs, and angles, which could affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

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

**(g) Replacement**

At the later of the times specified in paragraphs (g)(1) and (g)(2) of this AD: Replace the clips, shear webs, and angles at rear fuselage section 19, frame (FR)72 and FR74, and do all applicable related investigative actions before further flight, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1266, Revision 01, dated June 20, 2013. If any crack is found during any related investigative action required by this AD: Before further flight, repair 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).

(1) Before exceeding 48,000 flight cycles or 96,000 flight hours, whichever occurs first since the airplane's first flight.

(2) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD.

**(h) Additional Replacement for Airplanes on Which the Replacement Required by Paragraph (g) of this AD is Done Before 30,000 Flight Cycles or 60,000 Flight Hours**

For airplanes on which the replacement of clips, shear webs, and angles specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1266 is done before accumulating 30,000 flight cycles or 60,000 flight hours, whichever occurred first since the airplane's first flight: Within 30,000 flight cycles or 60,000 flight hours, whichever occurs first after that replacement, do the replacement specified in paragraph (g) of this AD.

**(i) Credit for Previous Actions**

Except as required by paragraph (h) of this AD: This paragraph provides credit for the replacement required by paragraph (g) of this AD, if those actions were performed before the effective date of this AD using Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1266, dated January 11, 2013, 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: Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International

Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-1405; fax 425-227-1149. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-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. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

**(2) Contacting the Manufacturer:** 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 EASA; or Airbus's EASA 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 2014-0177, dated July 25, 2014, 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-2015-1277.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus, Airworthiness Office – EIAS, 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](mailto: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 April 29, 2015.

Jeffrey E. Duven,  
Manager,  
Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.  
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