



[4910-13-P]

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2017-0563; Directorate Identifier 2017-NM-021-AD]**

**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 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by the determination that new inspection tasks for the drag brace support fitting of the main landing gear (MLG) and corrosion prevention and control program (CPCP) related tasks are necessary. This proposed AD would require revising the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate airworthiness limitations, including new inspection tasks for the drag brace support fitting of the MLG and to implement CPCP related tasks. 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: 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, Linköping, Sweden; telephone +46 13 18 5591; fax +46 13 18 4874; email [saab340techsupport@saabgroup.com](mailto:saab340techsupport@saabgroup.com); Internet <http://www.saabgroup.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-2017-0563; 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:** Shahram Daneshmandi, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone: 425-227-1112; 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-2017-0563; Directorate Identifier 2017-NM-021-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**

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive

2017-0033, dated February 17, 2017 (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 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B airplanes. The MCAI states:

The airworthiness limitations and/or certification maintenance instructions for SAAB SF340A and 340B, which are approved by EASA, are currently defined and published in the SAAB SF340A and 340B Airworthiness Limitation Manual (ALM). These instructions have been identified as mandatory for continued airworthiness.

Failure to accomplish these instructions could result in an unsafe condition [reduced structural integrity of the airplane].

Recently, Saab AB, Aeronautics issued SAAB SF340A and 340B ALM Revision 1, mainly to add new inspection tasks for the Main Landing Gear drag brace support fitting, and to implement Corrosion Prevention and Control Program related tasks.

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-2017-0563.

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

We reviewed SAAB 340 Airworthiness Limitation Manual, Revision 1, dated December 1, 2016. The service information describes airworthiness limitations, including inspection tasks for the drag brace support fitting of the MLG and CPCP related tasks. 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 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 the same type design.

## **Differences Between this Proposed AD and the MCAI or Service Information**

The MCAI specifies that if there are findings from the airworthiness limitations section (ALS) inspection tasks, corrective actions must be accomplished in accordance with SAAB maintenance documentation. However, this proposed AD does not include that requirement. Operators of U.S.-registered airplanes are required by general airworthiness and operational regulations to perform maintenance using methods that are acceptable to the FAA. We consider those methods to be adequate to address any corrective actions necessitated by the findings of ALS inspections required by this proposed AD.

This proposed AD would require revisions to certain operator maintenance documents to include new actions (e.g., inspections) and Critical Design Configuration Control Limitations (CDCCLs). Compliance with these actions and CDCCLs is required by 14 CFR 91.403(c). For airplanes that have been previously modified, altered, or repaired in the areas addressed by this proposed AD, the operator may not be able to accomplish the actions described in the revisions. In this situation, to comply with 14

CFR 91.403(c), the operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance according to paragraph (i)(1) of this proposed AD. The request should include a description of changes to the required actions that will ensure the continued damage tolerance of the affected structure.

### **Airworthiness Limitations Based on Type Design**

The FAA recently became aware of an issue related to the applicability of ADs that require incorporation of an ALS revision into an operator's maintenance or inspection program.

Typically, when these types of ADs are issued by civil aviation authorities of other countries, they apply to all airplanes covered under an identified type certificate (TC). The corresponding FAA AD typically retains applicability to all of those airplanes.

In addition, U.S. operators must operate their airplanes in an airworthy condition, in accordance with 14 CFR 91.7(a). Included in this obligation is the requirement to perform any maintenance or inspections specified in the ALS, and in accordance with the ALS as specified in 14 CFR 43.16 and 91.403(c), unless an alternative has been approved by the FAA.

When a type certificate is issued for a type design, the specific ALS, including revisions, is a part of that type design, as specified in 14 CFR 21.31(c).

The sum effect of these operational and maintenance requirements is an obligation to comply with the ALS defined in the type design referenced in the manufacturer's conformity statement. This obligation may introduce a conflict with an

AD that requires a specific ALS revision if new airplanes are delivered with a later revision as part of their type design.

To address this conflict, the FAA has approved alternative methods of compliance (AMOCs) that allow operators to incorporate the most recent ALS revision into their maintenance/inspection programs, in lieu of the ALS revision required by the AD. This eliminates the conflict and enables the operator to comply with both the AD and the type design.

However, compliance with AMOCs is normally optional, and we recently became aware that some operators choose to retain the AD-mandated ALS revision in their fleet-wide maintenance/inspection programs, including those for new airplanes delivered with later ALS revisions, to help standardize the maintenance of the fleet. To ensure that operators comply with the applicable ALS revision for newly delivered airplanes containing a later revision than that specified in an AD, we plan to limit the applicability of ADs that mandate ALS revisions to those airplanes that are subject to an earlier revision of the ALS, either as part of the type design or as mandated by an earlier AD.

This proposed AD therefore would apply to Model 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B airplanes with an original certificate of airworthiness or original export certificate of airworthiness that was issued on or before the date of approval of the ALS revision identified in this proposed AD. Operators of airplanes with an original certificate of airworthiness or original export certificate of airworthiness issued after that date must comply with the airworthiness limitations specified as part of the approved type design and referenced on the type certificate data sheet.

### **Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 87 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

#### **Estimated costs**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Labor cost</b>	<b>Parts cost</b>	<b>Cost per product</b>	<b>Cost on U.S. operators</b>
Revision of the airplane maintenance or inspection program	1 work-hour X \$85 per hour = \$85	\$0	\$85	\$7,395

### **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):

**Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics (Formerly Known as Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems):**

Docket No. FAA-2017-0563; Directorate Identifier 2017-NM-021-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 Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics (formerly known as Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems) Model 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B airplanes, certificated in any category, with an original certificate of airworthiness or original export certificate of airworthiness that was issued on or before December 1, 2016.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 05, Time Limits/Maintenance Checks.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by the determination that new inspection tasks for the drag brace support fitting of the main landing gear (MLG) and corrosion prevention and

control program (CPCP) related tasks are necessary. We are issuing this AD to prevent reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

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

**(g) Maintenance or Inspection Program Revision**

Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD: Revise the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate airworthiness limitations, including inspection tasks for the drag brace support fitting of the MLG and CPCP related tasks, specified in SAAB 340 Airworthiness Limitation Manual, Revision 1, dated December 1, 2016. The compliance time for the initial airworthiness limitation tasks is at the applicable compliance time specified in SAAB 340 Airworthiness Limitation Manual, Revision 1, dated December 1, 2016, or within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

**(h) No Alternative Actions, Intervals, Critical Design Configuration Control Limitations (CDCCLs)**

After the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, has been revised as required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (e.g., inspections), intervals, and/or CDCCLs may be used unless the actions, intervals, and/or CDCCLs are approved as an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i)(1) of this AD.

**(i) Other FAA AD Provisions**

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

**(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):** The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, 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 manager of the International Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j)(2) of this AD. 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.

**(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 European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

**(j) Related Information**

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2017-0033, dated February 17, 2017, 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-2017-0563.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Shahram Daneshmandi, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate,

FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone: 425-227-1112; fax: 425-227-1149.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics, SE-581 88, Linköping, Sweden; telephone +46 13 18 5591; fax +46 13 18 4874; email [saab340techsupport@saabgroup.com](mailto:saab340techsupport@saabgroup.com); Internet <http://www.saabgroup.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 June 12, 2017.

Dionne Palermo,  
Acting Manager,  
Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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