[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2022-1660; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01268-T; Amendment 39-22447; AD 2023-11-02]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus SAS 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). This AD was prompted by a determination that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations are necessary. This AD requires revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is incorporated by reference. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES:

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2022-1660; 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 final rule, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

• For material incorporated by reference in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; website easa.europa.eu. You may find this material on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

• You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety 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 at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2022-1660.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Rodina, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone 206-231-3225; email dan.rodina@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-601, B4-603, B4-620, and B4-622 airplanes, Model A300 B4-605R and B4-622R airplanes; Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes; and Model A300 F4-605R and F4-622R airplanes. The NPRM published in the *Federal Register* on January 12, 2023 (88 FR 2035). The

NPRM was prompted by AD 2022-0194, dated September 23, 2022, issued by EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union (EASA AD 2022-0194) (also referred to as the MCAI). The MCAI states that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations tasks related to the trimmable horizontal stabilizer actuators (THSA) are necessary. EASA AD 2022-0194 specifies that revised tasks (limitations) in Airbus A300-600 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS), Part 4, System Equipment Maintenance Requirements (SEMR) Revision 03, dated August 28, 2017, are required by EASA AD 2017-0202, dated October 12, 2017 (which corresponds to FAA AD 2018-18-21, Amendment 39-19400 (83 FR 47054, September 18, 2018) (AD 2018-18-21)). EASA AD 2022-0194 also specifies that incorporation of EASA AD 2022-0194 invalidates (terminates) prior instructions for the tasks specified in Airbus A300-600 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS), Part 4, System Equipment Maintenance Requirements (SEMR) Revision 03, Variation 3.1, dated June 30, 2022 (Variation 3.1), only. For this AD, the corresponding action is specified in paragraph (j)(2) of this AD, which states that accomplishing the actions specified in this AD terminates the corresponding requirements of AD 2018-18-21, for the tasks identified in the service information referenced in EASA AD 2022-0194 only.

The MCAI also states that EASA AD 2015-0081, dated May 7, 2015 (EASA AD 2015-0081) requires replacement of certain THSA. EASA AD 2015-0081 corresponds to FAA AD 2016-15-01, Amendment 39-18592 (81 FR 47696, July 22, 2016) (AD 2016-15-01). AD 2016-15-01 required inspecting THSA part numbers, serial numbers, and flight cycles on certain THSAs; and repetitive replacement of certain THSAs. The THSA limitation task specified in this AD addresses the actions required by AD 2016-15-01. Paragraph (j)(1) of this AD therefore terminates all of the requirements of AD 2016-15-01, for Model A300-600 series airplanes only.

In the NPRM, the FAA proposed to require revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations, as specified in EASA AD 2022-0194. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the risks associated with the effects of aging on airplane systems. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could change system characteristics, leading to an increased potential for failure of certain life-limited parts, and reduced structural integrity or controllability of the airplane.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2022-1660.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA received a comment from Air Line Pilots Association, International, who supported the NPRM without change.

The FAA received an additional comment from United Parcel Service (UPS). The following presents the comment received on the NPRM and the FAA's response.

Request to Extend Compliance Time and Threshold

UPS proposed a bridging plan to transition to the new Variation 3.1 with initial threshold of not to exceed 14,600 flight cycles, with repeat replacement of 13,500 flight cycles. UPS asserted that the restrictive compliance time specified in paragraph (h)(2) of the proposed AD could result in immediate grounding of airplanes with parts currently installed on the airplane accumulating between 13,500 flight cycles and 14,600 flight cycles, since a current parts shortage at repair vendors does not support the increase in number of part removals at the reduced threshold. UPS also noted that AD 2016-15-01 provided a 2-year compliance time for a larger threshold decrease from 47,000 flight cycles to 14,600 flight cycles, and that the current replacement program at 14,600 flight cycles is effective to maintain safety and reliability.

The FAA does not agree with the requested change. The manufacturer has confirmed that adequate parts are available to support the required compliance time. As noted in paragraph (h)(3) of this AD, "The initial compliance time for doing the tasks specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0194 is on or before the applicable "limitations" and "associated thresholds" as incorporated by the requirements of paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0194, or within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later." The FAA has determined that the compliance time, as proposed, should allow sufficient time for operators to coordinate with their respective vendors and accomplish the task. In developing an appropriate compliance time, the FAA considered the safety implications, the time necessary to accomplish the required actions, and normal maintenance schedules for timely accomplishment of the required actions. In light of these items, we have determined that the specified compliance time, as proposed, is appropriate. However, under the provisions of paragraph (k)(1) of this AD, the FAA will consider requests for approval of an extension of the compliance time if sufficient data are submitted to substantiate that the extension would provide an acceptable level of safety. This AD has not been changed with regard to this request.

Conclusion

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety requires adopting this AD as proposed. Accordingly, the FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on this product. Except for minor editorial changes, this AD is adopted as proposed in the NPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator.

Related Service Information under 1 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2022-0194 specifies new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations for certain THSAs. 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 ADDRESSES.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 128 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

The FAA has determined that revising the existing maintenance or inspection program takes an average of 90 work-hours per operator, although the agency recognizes that this number may vary from operator to operator. Since operators incorporate maintenance or inspection program changes for their affected fleet(s), the FAA has determined that a per-operator estimate is more accurate than a per-airplane estimate. Therefore, the agency estimates the average total cost per operator to be $7,650 (90 work-hours x $85 per work-hour).

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.

The FAA is 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

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will 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 that this AD:

(1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(3) 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 Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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:

2023-11-02 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39-22447; Docket No. FAA-2022-1660; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01268-T.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

This AD affects AD 2016-15-01, Amendment 39-18592 (81 FR 47696, July 22, 2016) (AD 2016-15-01); and AD 2018-18-21, Amendment 39-19400 (83 FR 47054, September 18, 2018) (AD 2018-18-21).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-601, B4-603, B4-620, and B4-622 airplanes, Model A300 B4-605R and B4-622R airplanes; Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes; and Model A300 F4-605R and F4-622R airplanes; certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a determination that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations are necessary. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the risks associated with the effects of aging on airplane systems. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could change system characteristics, leading to an increased potential for failure of certain life-limited parts, and reduced structural integrity or controllability 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, European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0194, dated September 23, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0194).

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2022-0194

(1) This AD does not adopt the requirements specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of EASA AD 2022-0194.

(2) Paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0194 specifies revising "the approved AMP" within 12 months after its effective date, but this AD requires revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, within 90 days after the effective date of this AD.

(3) The initial compliance time for doing the tasks specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0194 is on or before the applicable "limitations" and "associated thresholds" as incorporated by the requirements of paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0194, or within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(4) This AD does not adopt the provisions specified in paragraph (4) of EASA AD 2022-0194.

(5) This AD does not adopt the "Remarks" section of EASA AD 2022-0194.

(i) Provisions for Alternative Actions and Intervals

After the existing maintenance or inspection program has been revised as required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (e.g., inspections) and intervals are

allowed unless they are approved as specified in the provisions of the "Ref. Publications" section of EASA AD 2022-0194.

(j) Terminating Actions for AD 2016-15-01 and AD 2018-18-21

(1) Accomplishing the actions required by this AD terminates all requirements of AD 2016-15-01 for Model A300-600 series airplanes only.

(2) Accomplishing the actions required by this AD terminates the corresponding requirements of AD 2018-18-21, for the tasks identified in the service information referenced in EASA AD 2022-0194 only.

(k) Additional AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, International Validation 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 responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (l) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@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 instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Validation 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.

(l) Additional Information

Dan Rodina, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410,

Westbury, NY 11590; telephone 206-231-3225; email dan.rodina@faa.gov.

(m) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0194, dated September 23, 2022.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA AD 2022-0194, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; website easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(5) You may view this material that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, email fr.inspection@nara.gov, or go to: www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.

Issued on May 25, 2023.

Ross Landes, Deputy Director for Regulatory Operations,
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2023-11914 Filed: 6/5/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/6/2023]