



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2023-1642; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00183-T]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2022-18-14, which applies to certain Airbus SAS Model A330-200 series, A330-200 Freighter series, A330-300 series, A330-800 series, and A330-900 series airplanes. AD 2022-18-14 requires revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations. Since the FAA issued AD 2022-18-14, the FAA has determined that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations are necessary. This proposed AD would continue to require the actions in AD 2022-18-14, and would require revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate additional new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations, as specified in two European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) ADs, which are proposed for incorporation by reference (IBR). The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: The FAA 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 [regulations.gov](https://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.

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2023-1642; 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 mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- For material that is proposed for IBR in this NPRM, 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. It is also available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2023-1642.

- You may view this service information 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tim Dowling, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone: 206-231-3667; email: timothy.p.dowling@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2023-1642; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00183-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Tim Dowling, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone: 206-231-3667; email: timothy.p.dowling@faa.gov. Any commentary that the

FAA receives that is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Background

The FAA issued AD 2022-18-14, Amendment 39-22165 (87 FR 56566, September 15, 2022) (AD 2022-18-14), for certain Airbus SAS Model A330-201, -202, -203, -223, and -243 airplanes; Model A330-223F and -243F airplanes; Model A330-301, -302, -303, -321, -322, -323, -341, -342, and -343 airplanes; Model A330-841 airplanes; and Model A330-941 airplanes. AD 2022-18-14 was prompted by MCAI originated by EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union. EASA issued AD 2021-0261, dated November 22, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0261) (which prompted FAA AD 2022-18-14), to correct an unsafe condition.

AD 2022-18-14 requires revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate additional new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations. The FAA issued AD 2022-18-14 to address fatigue cracking, accidental damage, and corrosion in principal structural elements; such fatigue cracking, accidental damage, and corrosion could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Actions Since AD 2022-18-14 Was Issued

Since the FAA issued AD 2022-18-14, EASA superseded EASA AD 2021-0261 and issued EASA AD 2022-0187, dated September 13, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0187), for all Airbus SAS Model A330-201, -202, -203, -223, -223F, -243, -243F, -301, -302, -303, -321, -322, -323, -341, -342, -343, -841 and -941 airplanes. EASA AD 2022-0187 states that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations have been developed.

EASA also issued EASA AD 2023-0015, dated January 19, 2023 (EASA AD 2023-0015), for all Airbus SAS Model A330-201, -202, -203, -223, -223F, -243, -243F, -301, -302, -303, -321, -322, -323, -341, -342, and -343 airplanes. EASA AD 2023-0015 states that new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations have been developed. EASA

AD 2023-0015 also states that it requires certain tasks also required by EASA AD 2022-0187, and invalidates (terminates) the tasks that are also required by EASA AD 2022-0187. Therefore, for this proposed AD, where EASA AD 2023-0015 affects the same airworthiness limitations as those in EASA AD 2022-0187, the airworthiness limitations referenced in EASA AD 2023-0015 would prevail.

Airplanes with an original airworthiness certificate or original export certificate of airworthiness issued after November 18, 2022, must comply with the airworthiness limitations specified as part of the approved type design and referenced on the type certificate data sheet; this proposed AD therefore does not include those airplanes in the applicability.

The FAA is proposing this AD to address fatigue cracking, accidental damage, and corrosion in principal structural elements; such fatigue cracking, accidental damage, and corrosion could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane. You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2023-1642.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed EASA AD 2022-0187 and EASA AD 2023-0015. This service information specifies new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations for airplane structures. These documents are distinct since they apply to different airplane configurations.

This proposed AD would also require EASA AD 2021-0261, which the Director of the Federal Register approved for incorporation by reference as of October 20, 2022 (87 FR 56566, September 15, 2022).

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 ADDRESSES.

FAA's Determination

These products have been approved by the aviation authority of another country and are 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 is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM

This proposed AD would retain all of the requirements of AD 2022-18-14. This proposed AD would also require revising the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate additional new or more restrictive airworthiness limitations, which are specified in EASA AD 2022-0187 and EASA AD 2023-0015 already described, as proposed for incorporation by reference. Any differences with EASA AD 2022-0187 and EASA AD 2023-0015 are identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD.

This proposed AD would require revisions to certain operator maintenance documents to include new actions (e.g., inspections). Compliance with these actions 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 (AMOC) according to paragraph (m)(1) of this proposed AD.

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA) ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs.

The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, the FAA proposes to retain the IBR of EASA AD 2021-0261, and incorporate EASA AD 2022-0187 and EASA AD 2023-0015 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2021-0261, EASA AD 2022-0187, and EASA AD 2023-0015 through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2021-0261, EASA AD 2022-0187, or EASA AD 2023-0015 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in EASA AD 2021-0261, EASA AD 2022-0187, or EASA AD 2023-0015. Service information required by EASA AD 2021-0261, EASA AD 2022-0187, or EASA AD 2023-0015 for compliance will be available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2023-1642 after the FAA final rule is published.

Airworthiness Limitation ADs Using the New Process

The FAA’s process of incorporating by reference MCAI ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with corresponding FAA ADs has been limited to certain MCAI ADs (primarily those with service bulletins as the primary source of information for accomplishing the actions required by the FAA AD). However, the FAA is now expanding the process to include MCAI ADs that require a change to airworthiness limitation documents, such as airworthiness limitation sections.

For these ADs that incorporate by reference an MCAI AD that changes airworthiness limitations, the FAA requirements are unchanged. Operators must revise the existing maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate the

information specified in the new airworthiness limitation document. The airworthiness limitations must be followed according to 14 CFR 91.403(c) and 91.409(e).

The previous format of the airworthiness limitation ADs included a paragraph that specified that no alternative actions (e.g., inspections) or intervals may be used unless the actions and intervals are approved as an AMOC in accordance with the procedures specified in the AMOCs paragraph under “Additional AD Provisions.” This new format includes a “New Provisions for Alternative Actions and Intervals” paragraph that does not specifically refer to AMOCs, but operators may still request an AMOC to use an alternative action or interval.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 120 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

The FAA estimates the total cost per operator for the retained actions from AD 2022-18-14 to be \$7,650 (90 work-hours x \$85 per work-hour).

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.

The FAA estimates the total cost per operator for the new proposed actions 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

The FAA 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) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Would 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:

a. Removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2022-18-14, Amendment 39-22165 (87 FR 56566, September 15, 2022); and

b. Adding the following new AD:

Airbus SAS: Docket No. FAA-2023-1642; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00183-T.

(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

This AD replaces AD 2022-18-14, Amendment 39-22165 (87 FR 56566, September 15, 2022) (AD 2022-18-14).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus SAS airplanes, identified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (5) of this AD, certificated in any category, with an original airworthiness certificate or original export certificate of airworthiness issued on or before November 18, 2022.

(1) Model A330-201, -202, -203, -223, and -243 airplanes.

(2) Model A330-223F and -243F airplanes.

(3) Model A330-301, -302, -303, -321, -322, -323, -341, -342, and -343 airplanes.

(4) Model A330-841 airplanes.

(5) Model A330-941 airplanes.

(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 fatigue cracking, accidental damage, and corrosion in principal structural elements. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Retained Revision of the Existing Maintenance or Inspection Program, with No Changes

This paragraph restates the requirements of paragraph (i) of AD 2022-18-14, with no changes. For airplanes with an original airworthiness certificate or original export certificate of airworthiness issued on or before November 2, 2021, 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 2021-0261, dated November 22, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0261). Accomplishing the revision of the existing maintenance or inspection program required by paragraph (j) of this AD terminates the requirements of this paragraph.

(h) Retained Exceptions to EASA AD 2021-0261, with No Changes

This paragraph restates the exceptions specified in paragraph (j) of AD 2022-18-14, with no changes.

(1) Where EASA AD 2021-0261 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using October 20, 2022 (the effective date of AD 2022-18-14).

(2) The requirements specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of EASA AD 2021-0261 do not apply to this AD.

(3) Paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0261 specifies revising “the 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 October 20, 2022 (the effective date of AD 2022-18-14).

(4) The initial compliance time for doing the tasks specified in paragraph (3) of EASA 2021-0261 is at the applicable “associated thresholds” as incorporated by the requirements of paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0261, or within 90 days after October 20, 2022 (the effective date of AD 2022-18-14), whichever occurs later.

(5) This AD does not require incorporating Section 4, “Damage Tolerant-Airworthiness Limitations Items-Tasks Beyond MPPT,” of “the ALS” specified in EASA AD 2021-0261.

(6) The provisions specified in paragraphs (4) and (5) of EASA AD 2021-0261 do not apply to this AD.

(7) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2021-0261 does not apply to this AD.

(i) Retained Restrictions on Alternative Actions and Intervals with a New Exception

This paragraph restates the requirements of AD 2022-18-14, with a new exception. Except as required by paragraph (j) of this AD, 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 2021-0261.

(j) New Revision of the Existing Maintenance or Inspection Program

Except as specified in paragraph (k) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2022-0187, dated September 13, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0187); and EASA AD 2023-0015, dated January 19, 2023 (EASA AD 2023-0015); as applicable. Where EASA AD 2023-0015

affects the same airworthiness limitations as those in EASA AD 2022-0187, the airworthiness limitations referenced in EASA AD 2023-0015 prevail.

(k) New Exceptions to EASA AD 2022-0187 and to EASA AD 2023-0015

(1) This AD does not adopt the requirements specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of EASA AD 2022-0187 and of EASA AD 2023-0015.

(2) Paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0187 and of EASA AD 2023-0015 specifies revising “the AMP” within 12 months after the respective EASA AD’s 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 2022-0187 and of EASA AD 2023-0015 is at the applicable “associated thresholds” as incorporated by the requirements of paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2022-0187 and of EASA AD 2023-0015, or within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(4) This AD does not adopt the provisions specified in paragraphs (4) and (5) of EASA AD 2022-0187.

(5) Where EASA AD 2022-0187 defines “The ALS,” replace the text “Airbus A330 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 2 Revision 05,” with “Airbus A330 Airworthiness Limitations Section (ALS) Part 2 Revision 05 Issue 02.”

(6) This AD does not adopt the provisions specified in paragraph (4) of EASA AD 2023-0015.

(7) This AD does not require incorporating Section 4, “Damage Tolerant-Airworthiness Limitations Items-Tasks Beyond MPPT,” of “the ALS” specified in EASA AD 2022-0187 and in EASA AD 2023-0015.

(8) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2022-0187 and of EASA AD 2023-0015.

(l) New Provisions for Alternative Actions and Intervals

After the existing maintenance or inspection program has been revised as required by paragraph (j) 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 2022-0187 and of EASA AD 2023-0015.

(m) 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 (n) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov.

(i) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(ii) The AMOC specified in letter AIR-676-19-120, dated March 5, 2019, approved previously for AD 2018-24-04, Amendment 39-19508 (83 FR 60756, November 27, 2018), is approved as an AMOC for the corresponding provisions of 2022-0187 and EASA AD 2023-0015 that are required by paragraph (j) of this AD for Model A330-200 and A330-300 series airplanes modified from a passenger to freighter configuration under the provisions of FAA Supplemental Type Certificate ST04038NY.

(iii) The AMOC specified in letter AIR-731A-20-179, dated May 11, 2020, approved previously for AD 2019-23-02 Amendment 39-19795 (84 FR 64725, November 25, 2019), is approved as an AMOC for the corresponding provisions of EASA AD 2022-0187 and of EASA AD 2023-0015 that are required by paragraph (j) of

this AD for Model A330-200 and A330-300 series airplanes modified from a passenger to freighter configuration under the provisions of FAA Supplemental Type Certificate ST04038NY.

(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.

(n) Additional Information

For more information about this AD, contact Tim Dowling, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone: 206-231-3667; email: timothy.p.dowling@faa.gov.

(o) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) 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.

(3) The following service information was approved for IBR on [DATE 35 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION OF THE FINAL RULE].

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0187, dated September 13, 2022.

(ii) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2023-0015, dated January 19, 2023.

(4) The following service information was approved for IBR on October 20, 2022 (87 FR 56566, September 15, 2022).

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2021-0261, dated November 22, 2021.

(ii) [Reserved]

(5) For EASA AD 2021-0261, EASA AD 2022-0187, and EASA AD 2023-0015, 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 these EASA ADs on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

(6) You may view this service information 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.

(7) You may view this service information 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 July 21, 2023.

Victor Wicklund, Deputy Director,
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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