



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2024-2548; Project Identifier MCAI-2024-00401-T; Amendment
39-23026; AD 2025-09-05]

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 certain Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes, Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. This AD was prompted by cracks being found during full-scale fatigue testing of the keel beam bottom panel between the edge profile and stringer run-out at a certain frame and stringer. This AD requires repetitive special detailed inspections (SDI) of the affected area, and corrective actions, if necessary, 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](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2024-2548; 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 EASA material identified in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@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 at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2024-2548.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Timothy 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:

Background

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes, Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111,

-112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. The NPRM published in the *Federal Register* on December 9, 2024 (89 FR 97564). The NPRM was prompted by AD 2024-0135, dated July 10, 2024, issued by EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union (EASA AD 2024-0135) (also referred to as the MCAI). The MCAI states that during full-scale fatigue testing, cracks were found on the keel beam bottom panel between the edge profile and stringer run-out at frame 46 and stringer 37, left- and right-hand sides. Crack propagation in this area could possibly result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

In the NPRM, the FAA proposed to require repetitive SDIs of the affected area, and corrective actions, if necessary, as specified in EASA AD 2024-0135. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2024-2548.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA received comments from Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) and United Airlines, who supported the NPRM without change.

The FAA received an additional comment from American Airlines. The following presents the comments received on the NPRM and the FAA's response to each comment.

Request for Change to Paragraph (h)(3)

American Airlines requested that paragraph (h)(3) of the proposed AD be updated to read: "Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2024-0135 does not allow corrective action as terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements 'unless otherwise stated in the repair instructions provide by Airbus,' this AD requires that any terminating action be specified in repair instructions approved using a method approved by the Manager, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety 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.” The commenter stated that this change would align paragraph (h)(3) of the proposed AD with paragraph (h)(2) of the proposed AD and still require proper approval for any terminating repair instructions, and would also reduce unnecessary duplicate Alternative Method of Compliance (AMOC) requests from operators if multiple airplanes have similar repair procedures accomplished.

The FAA agrees to clarify. The FAA has determined that paragraph (h)(3) of the proposed AD was not clearly written. The intent of that exception is to specify that the “repair instructions” referenced in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2024-0135 are the same repair instructions obtained as specified in paragraph (h)(2) of this AD. The FAA has revised paragraph (h)(3) of this AD to specify that the repair instructions are those obtained from the Manager, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS’s EASA DOA.

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 comment 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, and any other changes described previously, this AD is adopted as proposed in the NPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator.

Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2024-0135 specifies procedures for repetitive SDIs for discrepancies (cracks) of the keel beam bottom panel between the edge profile and stringer run-out at

frame 46 and stringer 37, left-hand and right-hand sides. EASA AD 2024-0135 also specifies corrective actions including crack repair. 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.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 1,920 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated costs for required actions

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
16 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$1,360	\$0	\$1,360	\$2,611,200

The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the on-condition repairs specified in this AD.

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:

2025-09-05 Airbus SAS: Amendment 39-23026; Docket No. FAA-2024-2548; Project Identifier MCAI-2024-00401-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

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to the Airbus SAS airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (4) of this AD and in European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2024-0135, dated July 10, 2024 (EASA AD 2024-0135).

(1) Model A318-111, -112, -121, and -122 airplanes.

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

(3) Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes.

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

(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by cracks being found during full-scale fatigue testing of the keel beam bottom panel between the edge profile and stringer run-out at frame 46 and stringer 37, left- and right-hand sides. The FAA is issuing this AD to address crack propagation in this area. 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) Requirements

Except as specified in paragraphs (h) and (i) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2024-0135.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2024-0135

(1) Where EASA AD 2024-0135 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2024-0135 specifies “if, during any inspection as required by paragraph (1) of this AD, discrepancies are detected, as defined in the SB, before next flight, contact Airbus for approved repair instructions and accomplish those instructions accordingly,” this AD requires replacing that text with “if, during any inspection as required by paragraph (1) of this AD, any cracking is detected, the cracking must be repaired before further flight using a method approved by the Manager, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety 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) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2024-0135 specifies “unless otherwise stated in the repair instructions provide by Airbus,” this AD requires replacing that text with “unless otherwise stated in the repair instructions provided by the Manager, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety 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.”

(4) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2024-0135.

(i) No Reporting Requirement

Although the material referenced in EASA AD 2024-0135 specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not include that requirement.

(j) Additional AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety 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 manager of AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) of this AD and email to: AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards 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, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety 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)*: Except as required by paragraph (j)(2) of this AD, if any material contains procedures or tests that are identified as RC, those 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.

(k) Additional Information

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

(I) Material Incorporated by Reference

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

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

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2024-0135, dated July 10, 2024.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA material identified in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu. You may find this material 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 at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, visit www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations or email fr.inspection@nara.gov.

Issued on April 24, 2025.

Peter A. White,
Deputy Director, Integrated Certificate Management Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.
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