

requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent delamination of the wing and empennage leading edge due to improper installation of the wing de-ice boot, which could result in reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 75 flight hours or 120 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later: Perform a one-time visual inspection for delamination, erosion, and condition of fillet sealant and conductive edge sealer of the wing and empennage leading edge area behind the de-ice boots, in accordance with EMBRAER Alert Service Bulletin 120-51-A004, Revision 01, dated November 10, 1997. Except as provided by paragraph (b) of this AD, prior to further flight, accomplish follow-on corrective actions in accordance with the alert service bulletin.

(b) If any discrepancy is found during accomplishment of paragraph (a) of this AD, and the alert service bulletin specifies to contact EMBRAER: Prior to further flight, repair the affected structure in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Small Airplane Directorate.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Atlanta ACO. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Atlanta ACO.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Atlanta ACO.

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in Brazilian airworthiness directive 97-09-07 (undated).

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 23, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-8097 Filed 3-26-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-NM-179-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300, A300-600, A310, A319, A320, A321, A330, and A340 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to all Airbus Model A300, A300-600, and A310 series airplanes, and certain Airbus Model A319, A320, A321, A330, and A340 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive visual inspections of the striker and guide valve of the passenger door actuators and certain emergency door actuators for corrosion, and corrective action, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect and correct corrosion of the emergency actuator mechanism, which could cause failure of the emergency actuator striker mechanism on the passenger or emergency doors, and lead to difficulty in opening the passenger or emergency doors during an emergency evacuation.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 27, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-NM-179-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Norman B. Martenson, Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington

98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2110; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 96-NM-179-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-NM-179-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Airbus Model A300, A300-600, and A310 series airplanes, and on certain Airbus Model A319, A320, A321, A330, and A340 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that a failure of the emergency power assist feature on a passenger door has occurred on one Model A320 series airplane. The failure of the emergency actuator, which provides the power assist feature, was attributed to corrosion found in the guide valve bore, on the striker end, and in the striker hole. The same emergency actuator striker mechanism part is installed on

all of the previously mentioned models; therefore, such corrosion may exist or develop on these airplanes as well. This condition, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could result in difficulty in opening the passenger or emergency doors during an emergency evacuation.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletins A300-52-0168, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A300 series airplanes); A300-52-6052, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes); A310-52-2058, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A310 series airplanes); All Operator Telex (AOT) 52-12, Revision 1, dated May 9, 1996 (for Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes); A330-52-3038, Revision 1, dated December 2, 1996 (for Model A330 series airplanes); and A340-52-4048, Revision 3, dated June 10, 1997 (for Model A340 series airplanes), which describe procedures for the following:

- visually inspecting the striker and guide valve of the passenger door actuators (for all airplanes) and emergency door actuators (for Model A321, A330, A340 series airplanes) for corrosion;
- cleaning and reinstalling the emergency actuator striker mechanism; and
- replacing the emergency actuator striker mechanism with a serviceable part.

The DGAC classified this service information as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directives 97-062-213(B), dated February 26, 1997; 96-093-080(B)R2, dated October 22, 1997; and 96-195-037(B)R1, and 96-196-048(B)R1, both dated December 3, 1997; in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

FAA's Conclusions

These airplane models are manufactured in France and are type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service information described previously, except as discussed below.

Differences Between This Proposed AD and the Related Foreign AD

Operators should note that, unlike the procedures described in the previously cited French airworthiness directives; this proposed AD would not permit dispatch with a door actuator striker mechanism inoperative. The FAA has determined that, because of the safety implications and consequences associated with such inoperative equipment, any inoperative striker mechanism that is found to be corroded must be either replaced or cleaned such that proper function is restored prior to further flight.

Cost Impact: Model A300 and A300-600 Series Airplanes

The FAA estimates that 85 Model A300 and A300-600 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 9 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspections, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$45,900, or \$540 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Cost Impact: Model A310 Series Airplanes

The FAA estimates that 41 Model A310 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 6 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspections, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$14,760, or \$360 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Cost Impact: Model A319 and A320 Series Airplanes

The FAA estimates that 128 Model A319 and A320 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 4 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators of these

airplanes is estimated to be \$30,720, or \$240 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Cost Impact: Model A321, A330, and A340 Series Airplanes

There are currently no Model A321, A330, or A340 series airplanes on the U.S. Register. All of these airplanes included in the applicability of this proposed rule currently are operated by non-U.S. operators under foreign registry; therefore, they are not directly affected by this AD action. However, the FAA considers it necessary to include these airplanes in the applicability of this proposed rule in order to ensure that the unsafe condition is addressed in the event that any of the subject airplanes are imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future.

Should an affected Model A321 series airplane be imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, it would take approximately 8 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspections. Based on an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour, the cost impact of the proposed inspections would be \$480 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Should an affected Model A330 or A340 series airplane be imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, it would take approximately 32 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspections. Based on an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour, the cost impact of the proposed inspections would be \$1,920 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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.

Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that 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); and (3) if

promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Airbus Industrie: Docket 96–NM–179–AD.

Applicability: All Model A300, A300–600, and A310 series airplanes; and Model A319, A320, A321, A330 and A340 series airplanes, excluding Model A319 and A320 series airplanes on which Airbus Modification 26015 has been accomplished, and excluding Model A321 series airplanes on which both Airbus Modifications 26015 and 26211 have been accomplished, and excluding Model A330 and A340 series airplanes on which both Airbus Modifications 45090 and 45155 have been accomplished; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (d) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To detect and correct corrosion of the emergency actuator mechanism, which could cause failure of the emergency actuator striker mechanism on the passenger or

emergency doors, and lead to difficulty in opening the passenger or emergency doors during an emergency evacuation, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 500 flight hours after the effective date of this AD, or within 36 months after date of manufacture, whichever occurs later, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3 years: Perform the actions required by paragraphs (a)(1) and/or (a)(2) of this AD, as applicable, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–52–0168, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A300 series airplanes); A300–52–6052, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A300–600 series airplanes); A310–52–2058, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A310 series airplanes); A330–52–3038, Revision 1, dated December 2, 1996 (for Model A330 series airplanes); A340–52–4048, Revision 3, dated June 10, 1997 (for Model A340 series airplanes); or Airbus All Operator Telex (AOT) 52–12, Revision 1, dated May 9, 1996 (for Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes); as applicable.

(1) For Model A321, A330, and A340 series airplanes: Visually inspect the striker and guide valve of the emergency door actuators for corrosion.

(2) For all airplanes: Visually inspect the striker and guide valve of the passenger door actuators for corrosion.

Note 2: Additional service information regarding the required inspections on Airbus Model A300, A300–600, and A310 series airplanes is provided in RATIER–FIGEAC Service Bulletin 701–5000–52–9, Revision 1, dated October 10, 1996.

(b) If corrosion is found during any inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, prior to further flight, accomplish either paragraph (b)(1) or (b)(2) of this AD, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–52–0168, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A300 series airplanes); A300–52–6052, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A300–600 series airplanes); A310–52–2058, dated December 4, 1996 (for Model A310 series airplanes); A330–52–3038, Revision 1, dated December 2, 1996 (for Model A330 series airplanes); A340–52–4048, Revision 3, dated June 10, 1997 (for Model A340 series airplanes), or Airbus AOT 52–12, Revision 1, dated May 9, 1996 (for Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes); as applicable.

(1) Clean the corroded areas of the emergency actuator striker mechanism to restore proper function, and re-install the mechanism; and, within 18 months after the corrosion is found, replace the mechanism with a serviceable part. Or

(2) Replace the emergency actuator striker mechanism with a serviceable part.

(c) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install a passenger door or emergency door actuator on any airplane without first inspecting that actuator in accordance with paragraph (a) of this AD, and repairing, if necessary, in accordance with paragraph (b) of this AD.

(d) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators

shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116.

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM–116.

(e) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Note 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directives 97–062–213(B), dated February 26, 1997; 96–093–080(B)R2, dated October 22, 1997; and 96–195–037(B)R1 and 96–196–048(B)R1, both dated December 3, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 23, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–8128 Filed 3–26–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–102–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Short Brothers Model SD3–30, SD3–60, SD3–SHERPA, and SD3–60 SHERPA Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to all Short Brothers Model SD3–30, SD3–60, SD3–SHERPA, and SD3–60 SHERPA series airplanes. This proposal would require revising the Airplane Flight Manual (AFM) to modify the limitation that prohibits positioning the power levers below the flight idle stop during flight, and to provide a statement of the consequences of positioning the power levers below the flight idle stop during flight. This proposal is prompted by incidents and accidents involving airplanes equipped with turboprop engines in which the ground propeller beta range was used improperly during flight. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent loss of airplane controllability caused by