

### Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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:

**Saab Aircraft AB:** Amendment 39-10449, Docket 98-NM-49-AD.

**Applicability:** Model SAAB 340B series airplanes; manufacturers serial numbers -205, -207, -230, -276, -281, -289, -292, -296, -302, -308, -310, -311, -315, -316, -318, -327, -328, -331, -333, -336, -337, -351, -355, -357, -360 through -365 inclusive, -368, -378, and -399; certificated in any category.

**Note 1:** This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been 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 (b) 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 failure of the cargo bulkhead floor attachments, which could result in damage to the airplane structure and possible injury to passengers and crewmembers, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 3 months after the effective date of this AD, adjust the cargo baggage net; replace the baggage net placard on the aft face of the kinked bulkhead with a new placard; and install new placards on the right-hand cargo bay panel; in accordance with SAAB Service Bulletin 340-25-244, dated June 13, 1997.

(b) 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 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of

compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(c) 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.

(d) The actions shall be done in accordance with SAAB Service Bulletin 340-25-244, dated June 13, 1997. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Saab Aircraft AB, SAAB Aircraft Product Support, S-581.88, Linköping, Sweden. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**Note 3:** The subject of this AD is addressed in Swedish airworthiness directive (SAD) 1-118, dated October 9, 1997.

(e) This amendment becomes effective on July 6, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 31, 1998.

**Darrell M. Pederson,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-8903 Filed 4-6-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 95-NM-92-AD; Amendment 39-10451; AD 98-08-02]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300-600 Series Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to all Airbus Model A300-600 series airplanes, that requires repetitive replacement of the universal joints and steady bearings of the flap transmission system with new parts at regular intervals, or overhaul. This amendment is prompted by a report of a malfunction of a universal joint in the flap transmission system on one wing due to fatigue failure. The actions specified by this AD are intended to ensure replacement or overhaul of certain universal joints and bearings of the transmission system when they have reached their maximum life limit. Failure of universal joints and bearings

could lead to an asymmetric condition of the flaps, which could adversely affect controllability of the airplane.

**DATES:** Effective May 12, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of May 12, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**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:** A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to all Airbus Model A300-600 series airplanes was published in the **Federal Register** on July 18, 1995 (60 FR 36748). That action proposed to require repetitive replacement of the universal joints and steady bearings of the flap transmission system with new parts at regular intervals.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the comments received.

#### Support for the Proposal

One commenter supports the proposed rule.

#### Request to Withdraw the Proposal

Three commenters request that the proposed AD be withdrawn because overhauling is already mandatory under the Maintenance Review Board (MRB) requirements. One commenter states that the maintenance program already includes a certification maintenance requirement (CMR) inspection of these gearboxes and bearings. The commenter states that because CMR inspections are mandatory, the proposed rule is redundant.

The FAA does not concur with the commenters' request to withdraw the proposal. The inspections required by this AD are to be accomplished in

accordance with the service bulletin, which provides additional detailed information beyond the inspections described in the MRB or in the CMR. Therefore, the FAA has determined that this AD is necessary to address the unsafe condition.

One commenter requests that the proposed AD not be adopted because the AD is based on one incident. The commenter did not provide any additional justification for its request. The FAA does not concur. An assessment by the manufacturer and Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC) of the incident determined that a similar disconnection of the flap transmission system may occur on other airplanes of the same design. Based on this assessment, the actions required by this AD are necessary to address the identified unsafe condition.

### Overhaul Versus Replacement

Three commenters request that the proposed AD allow overhaul rather than replacement of the units. One commenter states that the requirements of the proposed AD are not in line with the DGAC and the manufacturer's positions that overhaul of the universal joints and bearings is acceptable. The FAA concurs. However, this overhaul is only acceptable for an additional 16,000 landings on the affected parts. These overhauled parts provide only a limited service life, at which time the parts must be replaced. The FAA has determined that, in addition to replacement of the units, overhaul, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-27-6028, dated December 19, 1994, is also acceptable. Therefore, paragraph (a) of the final rule has been revised accordingly.

### Requests to Revise Cost Impact Information

Two commenters request revision of the cost estimate. Two commenters provided additional cost information for overhauling or replacing the bearings. Additionally, the commenters state that the steady bearings are installed in numerous locations in the airplane with two of those steady bearing positions being the subject of the AD.

The FAA concurs with the commenters' request to revise the cost estimate based on the new cost for overhaul of the bearings. The commenters state that the cost of accomplishing the overhaul is approximately \$4,000 to \$4,500 per bearing, rather than \$5,660 per airplane, as estimated in the proposed rule. After considering the data presented by the commenters, the FAA concurs that the cost for overhauling the parts may be

higher than previously estimated in the proposal. In consideration of this new information, the FAA has revised the cost impact information, below, to indicate that required parts will cost approximately \$9,000 per airplane, (\$4,500 per bearing, two bearings per airplane). Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$483,000, or \$9,660 per airplane.

This AD only requires replacement or overhaul of two bearings. The FAA recognizes that, in accomplishing the requirements of any AD, operators may incur "incidental" costs in addition to "direct" costs. The economic analysis in AD rulemaking actions, however, is limited only to the cost of actions actually required by the AD.

### Conclusion

After careful review of the available data, including the comments noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule with the changes previously described. The FAA has determined that these changes will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

### Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 50 Model A300-600 series airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 11 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts will cost approximately \$9,000 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$483,000, or \$9,660 per airplane.

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

### Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein will 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 final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (1) is not a

"significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); 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. A final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

### List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

### Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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:

**98-08-02 Airbus Industrie:** Amendment 39-10451. Docket 95-NM-92-AD.

*Applicability:* All Model A300-600 series airplanes, certificated in any category.

**Note 1:** This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been 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 (b) 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 ensure replacement or overhaul of certain universal joints and bearings of the flap transmission that have reached their maximum life limit, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 16,000 total landings on the universal joints and bearings of the flap transmission system, or within

500 landings after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, accomplish paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD.

Thereafter, prior to the accumulation of 16,000 total landings on the universal joints and bearings, repeat the actions required by either paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD.

(1) Replace affected bearings and universal joints of the flap transmission system with new parts, in accordance with Airbus All Operator Telex (AOT) 27-17, Revision 01, dated July 11, 1994, or Airbus Service Bulletin A300-27-6028, dated December 19, 1994; or

(2) Overhaul the affected bearings and universal joints of the flap transmission system in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-27-6028, dated December 19, 1994. Prior to the accumulation of 16,000 landings after accomplishing the overhaul, replace affected bearing and universal joints with new parts in accordance with the AOT or the service bulletin.

(b) 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 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(c) 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.

(d) The actions shall be done in accordance with Airbus All Operator Telex (AOT) 27-17, Revision 01, dated July 11, 1994, or Airbus Service Bulletin A300-27-6028, dated December 19, 1994. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**Note 3:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 94-206-167(B) R1, dated March 15, 1995.

(e) This amendment becomes effective on May 12, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 31, 1998.

**Darrell M. Pederson,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
[FR Doc. 98-8900 Filed 4-6-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 71

[Airspace Docket No. 98-ASW-21]

#### Revocation of Class E Airspace; Spofford, TX

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Direct final rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** This action revokes the Class E airspace at Spofford, TX. The cancellation of the NDB runway I special instrument approach procedure removes the need for Class E airspace extending upward from 700 feet above the surface within a 6.4-mile radius of the airport and within 3.1 miles each side of the 204° bearing from the Spofford RBN extending from the 6.4-mile radius to 7.4 miles southwest of the NDB. This action is intended to revoke the unnecessary Class E airspace.

**DATES:** Effective 0901 UTC, August 13, 1998. Comments must be received on or before May 22, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments on the rule in triplicate to Manager, Airspace Branch, Air Traffic Division, Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region, Docket No. 98-ASW-21, Fort Worth, TX 76193-0520.

The official docket may be examined in the Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Federal Aviation Administration, 2601 Meacham Boulevard, Room 663, Fort Worth, TX, between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. An informal docket may also be examined during normal business hours at the Airspace Branch, Air Traffic Division, Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region, Room 414, Fort Worth, TX.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Donald J. Day, Operations Branch, Air Traffic Division, Southwest Region, Federal Aviation Administration, Fort Worth, TX 76193-0520, telephone 817-222-5593.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This amendment to 14 CFR part 71 revokes the Class E airspace at Spofford, TX. The cancellation of the NDB runway 1 special instrument approach procedure removes the need for Class E airspace extending upward from 700 feet above the surface within a 6.4-mile radius of the airport and within 3.1 miles each side of the 204° bearing from the Spofford RBN extending from the 6.4-mile radius to 7.4 miles southwest of the

NDB. This action is intended to revoke the unnecessary Class E airspace.

Class E airspace designations are published in Paragraph 6005 of FAA Order 7400.9E, dated September 10, 1997, and effective September 16, 1997, which is incorporated by reference in 14 CFR 71.1. The Class E airspace designation listed in this document will be removed subsequently from the order.

#### The Direct Final Rule Procedure

The FAA anticipates that this regulation will not result in adverse or negative comment and therefore is issuing it as a direct final rule. A substantial number of previous opportunities provided to the public to comment on substantially identical actions have resulted in negligible adverse comments or objections. Unless a written adverse or negative comment or a written notice of intent to submit an adverse or negative comment is received within the comment period, the regulation will become effective on the date specified above. After the close of the comment period, the FAA will publish a document in the **Federal Register** indicating that no adverse or negative comments were received and confirming the date on which the final rule will become effective. If the FAA does receive, within the comment period, an adverse or negative comment or written notice of intent to submit such a comment, a document withdrawing the direct final rule will be published in the **Federal Register**; and a notice of proposed rulemaking may be published with a new comment period.

#### Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule and was not preceded by a notice of proposed rulemaking, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified under the caption **ADDRESSES**. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended or withdrawn in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of this action and determining whether additional rulemaking action is needed.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of