

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 (e) 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 a potential fire hazard or the possible loss of elevator control system redundancy due to paper debris collecting on the hot pneumatic ducts below the cabin floor, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 450 flight hours or 3 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform an inspection to detect paper and lint debris in the areas behind the aft lavatory toilet shroud, behind the aft lavatory modules, and below the cabin floor aft of the aft cargo compartment bulkhead, in accordance with paragraph 3.

("Accomplishment Instructions") of McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD90-25A017, Revision R01, dated October 15, 1997. If any debris is found, prior to further flight, remove it in accordance with the alert service bulletin. Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 450 flight hours.

(b) Within 12 months after the effective date of this AD, modify the lavatory toilet shroud assemblies in accordance with paragraph 3. ("Accomplishment Instructions") of McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin MD90-25-022, Revision R01, dated October 15, 1997.

(c) Within 12 months after the effective date of this AD, modify the lavatory entry door louvers in accordance with paragraph 3. ("Accomplishment Instructions") of McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin MD90-25-023, Revision R01, dated October 15, 1997.

(d) Modification of the toilet shroud assemblies and the lavatory entry door louvers in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this AD constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (a) of this AD.

(e) 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, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 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, Los Angeles ACO.

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

(f) 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.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 14, 1998.

John J. Hickey,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-13402 Filed 5-19-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-117-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B 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 certain Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB 340B series airplanes. This proposal would require modification of the detachable center inlet component of the air intake system of the engine. 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 prevent fuel and/or oil that may be present in the nacelle from entering the air intake system of the engine, which could result in a possible engine fire.

DATES: Comments must be received by June 19, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-117-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 Saab Aircraft AB, SAAB Aircraft Product Support, S-581.88, Linköping, Sweden. 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 98-NM-117-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. 98-NM-117-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The Luftfartsverket (LFV), which is the airworthiness authority for Sweden, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Saab Model SAAB SF340A and SAAB Model 340B series airplanes. The LFV advises that two holes were introduced in the rear portion of the detachable center inlet of the air intake system of the engine during the design and manufacturing of a certain number of these inlets. The LFV further advises that, under certain conditions, a pressure difference between the nacelle and the detachable center inlet component of the air intake system

could force residual fuel and/or oil, located in the nacelle, through these two holes and into the air intake system of the engine. Such condition, if not corrected, could result in a possible engine fire.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The manufacturer has issued SAAB Service Bulletin 340-30-073, dated August 18, 1997, including Attachment 1, dated March 6, 1997, which describes procedures for installation of a filler plate onto the detachable center inlet component of the engine air intake system. Accomplishment of the action specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The LfV classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued Swedish airworthiness directive 1-119, dated August 21, 1997, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in Sweden.

FAA's Conclusions

These airplane models are manufactured in Sweden 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 LfV has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the LfV, 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 bulletin described previously.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 135 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed modification, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact

of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$16,200, or \$120 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is 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.

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:

Saab Aircraft AB (Formerly SAAB Fairchild): Docket 98-NM-117-AD.

Applicability: Model SAAB SF340A and Model SAAB 340B series airplanes, as listed in SAAB Service Bulletin 340-30-073, dated August 18, 1997; 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 fuel and/or oil that may be present in the nacelle from entering the air intake system of the engine, which could result in a possible engine fire, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 2 years after the effective date of this AD, modify the detachable center inlet component of the air intake system of the engine, in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 340-30-073, dated August 18, 1997, including Attachment 1, dated March 6, 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.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in Swedish airworthiness directive 1-119, dated August 21, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 14, 1998.

John J. Hickey,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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