

any wire bundle is found to be chafed, prior to further flight, repair the wire bundle in accordance with the Boeing Standard Wiring Practices Manual, Document D6-54446, Revision 23, dated August 1998.

#### Spares Paragraph

(c) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install a wire support bracket having P/N 287N1112-8, -9, -20, or -21 on any airplane.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(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, Seattle 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, Seattle ACO.

**Note 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Seattle ACO.

#### Special Flight Permits

(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.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on July 27, 1999.

#### D. L. Riggin,

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-270-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Aerospatiale Model ATR42 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 Aerospatiale Model ATR42 series airplanes. This proposal would require a revision to the Airworthiness Limitations Section of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness to incorporate inspections to detect fatigue cracking in certain structure, inspection intervals, and life limits for certain items. 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 ensure that fatigue cracking of certain structural elements is detected and corrected; such fatigue cracking could adversely affect the structural integrity of these airplanes.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by September 17, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-270-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 Aerospatiale, 316 Route de Bayonne, 31060 Toulouse, Cedex 03, 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 97-NM-270-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. 97-NM-270-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, has notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Aerospatiale Model ATR42 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that analysis of fatigue test data has revealed that certain inspections must be performed at specific intervals to preclude fatigue cracking in certain areas of the airplane. Additionally, the DGAC advises that certain life limits must be imposed for various components on these airplanes to preclude the onset of fatigue cracking in those components.

Fatigue cracking of certain structural elements, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could adversely affect the structural integrity of these airplanes.

#### Description of Service Information

Aerospatiale has issued ATR42 Maintenance Planning Document (MPD), "Time Limits," Revision 2, dated January 1997, which includes the following:

1. Life limit times for certain structural components or parts of the nose landing gear, the main landing gear, the main landing gear support structure, engine components, and various equipment.

2. Structural inspection times to detect fatigue cracking of certain Structural Significant Items (SSIs).

Performing the specified structural inspections will identify fatigue cracking, and revising the component life limits will preclude the onset of fatigue cracking of certain structural elements of the airplane.

The French DGAC has classified Revision 2 of the Time Limits section of the Aerospatiale Model ATR42 Maintenance Planning Document, dated January 1997, as mandatory, and issued French airworthiness directive 95-104-060 (B), dated May 24, 1995, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

### FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in France and is 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 French DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the French 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.

### Description of the 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 a revision to the Airworthiness Limitations Section of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness [Aerospatiale referring to this as the maintenance planning document (MPD)] to incorporate inspections to detect fatigue cracking of certain SSI's and to revise life limits for certain equipment and various components that are specified in the Time Limits section of the ATR42 Airworthiness Limitations of the Maintenance Planning Document, Revision 2, dated January 1997.

### Explanation of Action Taken by the FAA

In accordance with airworthiness standards requiring "damage tolerance assessments" [reference current section 1529 of parts 23, 25, 27, and 29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR); section 4 of parts 33 and 35 of the FAR; section 82 of part 31 of the FAR; and the Appendices referenced in those sections], all products certificated to comply with those sections must have Instructions for Continued Airworthiness (or, for some products, maintenance manuals), that include an Airworthiness Limitations Section. That section must set forth:

- Mandatory replacement times for structural components,
- Structural inspection intervals, and
- Related approved structural inspection procedures necessary to show compliance with the damage-tolerance requirements.

Compliance with the terms specified in the Airworthiness Limitations Sections is required by sections 43.16 (for persons maintaining products) and 91.403 (for operators) of the FAR.

In order to require compliance with these inspection intervals and life limits, the FAA must engage in rulemaking, namely the issuance of an AD. For products certificated to comply with the referenced part 25 requirements, it is within the authority of the FAA issue an AD requiring a revision to the Airworthiness Limitations Section that includes reduced life limits, or new or different structural inspection requirements. These revisions then are mandatory for operators under section 91.403(c) of the FAR, which prohibits operation of an airplane for which Airworthiness Limitations have been issued unless the inspection intervals specified in those limitations have been complied with.

Once that document is revised, as required, and the AD has been fully complied with, the life limit or structural inspection change remains enforceable as a part of the Airworthiness Limitations. (This is analogous to AD's that require changes to the Limitations Section of the Airplane Flight Manual.)

Requiring a revision of the Airworthiness Limitations, rather than requiring individual inspections, is advantageous for operators because it allows them to record AD compliance status only once—at the time they make the revision—rather than after every inspection. It also has the advantage of keeping all Airworthiness Limitations, whether imposed by original certification or by AD, in one place within the operator's maintenance program, thereby reducing the risk of non-compliance because of oversight or confusion.

### Cost Impact

There are approximately 291 Aerospatiale Model ATR42 series airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 106 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, 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 \$6,360 or \$60 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:

**Aerospatiale:** Docket 97-NM-270-AD.

**Applicability:** All Model ATR42 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 (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 ensure continued structural integrity of these airplanes, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, revise the Airworthiness Limitations Section of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness in accordance with Section 9, "Time Limits," of the ATR42 Maintenance Planning Document, Revision 2, dated January 1997. This may be accomplished by inserting a copy of Section 9, "Time Limits," of the ATR42 Maintenance Planning Document, Revision 2, dated January 1997, into the Airworthiness Limitations Section of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this AD: After the actions specified in paragraph (a) of this AD have been accomplished, no alternative inspections or inspection intervals may be approved for the structural elements specified in the documents listed in paragraph (a) of this AD.

(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, 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.

(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 French airworthiness directive 95-104-060 (B), dated May 24, 1995.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on July 27, 1999.

**D.L. Riggins,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
[FR Doc. 99-19809 Filed 8-2-99; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 97-NM-273-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; Aerospatiale Model ATR72 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 Aerospatiale Model ATR72 series airplanes. This proposal would require a revision to the Airworthiness Limitations Section of the Instructions for Continued Airworthiness to incorporate inspections to detect fatigue cracking in certain structure, inspection intervals, and life limits for certain components. 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 ensure that fatigue cracking of certain structural elements are detected and corrected; such fatigue cracking could adversely affect the structural integrity of these airplanes.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by September 17, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-273-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 Aerospatiale, 316 Route de Bayonne, 31060 Toulouse, Cedex 03, 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 97-NM-273-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

**Availability of NPRMs**

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**Discussion**

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, has notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Aerospatiale Model ATR72 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that analysis of fatigue test data has revealed that certain inspections must be performed at specific intervals to preclude fatigue cracking in certain areas of the airplane. Additionally, certain life limits must be imposed for various components on these airplanes to preclude the onset of fatigue cracking in those components.

Fatigue cracking of certain structural elements, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could adversely affect the structural integrity of these airplanes.

**Description of Service Information**

Aerospatiale has issued ATR72 Maintenance Planning Document (MPD), "Time Limits," Revision 1, dated February 1996, which includes the following:

1. Life limit times for certain structural components or parts of the nose landing gear, the main landing gear, the main landing gear support structure, engine components, and various equipment. And
2. Structural inspection times to detect fatigue cracking of certain Structural Significant Items (SSI's).