

[Federal Register: March 23, 2007 (Volume 72, Number 56)]
[Rules and Regulations]
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[DOCID:fr23mr07-5]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2006-26272; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-153-AD; Amendment 39-14999; AD 2007-06-18]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 airplanes. This AD requires repetitive inspections of the operation of the main landing gear (MLG) door opening sequence to determine if a defective actuator is installed, and replacing any defective actuator with a new actuator. This AD results from reports of slow operation of the MLG door opening/closing sequence due to a defective actuator. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct defective actuators of the MLG door, which could result in slow operation of the MLG door and consequent non-extension of the MLG during an emergency freefall operation.

DATES: This AD becomes effective April 27, 2007.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD as of April 27, 2007.

ADDRESSES: You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov> or in person at the Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Nassif Building, Room PL-401, Washington, DC.

Contact Airbus, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France, for service information identified in this AD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tim Dulin, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-2141; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Examining the Docket

You may examine the airworthiness directive (AD) docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov> or in person at the Docket Management Facility office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Docket Management Facility office (telephone (800) 647-5227) is located on the plaza level of the Nassif Building at the street address stated in the ADDRESSES section.

Discussion

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an AD that would apply to all Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 airplanes. That NPRM was published in the Federal Register on December 8, 2006 (71 FR 71101). That NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections of the operation of the main landing gear (MLG) door opening sequence to determine if a defective actuator is installed, and to replace any defective actuator with a new actuator.

Relevant Service Information

Since we issued the NPRM, we have reviewed Airbus Service Bulletin A320-32-1309, Revision 01, dated June 19, 2006. Revision 01 specifies that no additional work is necessary for airplanes modified by any previous issue. We referred to Airbus Service Bulletin A320-32-1309, dated March 7, 2006, in the NPRM for accomplishing the specified actions. We have changed this AD to refer to Revision 01 of the service bulletin for accomplishing the specified actions, and to give credit for accomplishing the specified actions in accordance with the original issue before the effective date of this AD.

Comments

We provided the public the opportunity to participate in the development of this AD. We received no comments on the NPRM or on the determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

We have carefully reviewed the available data and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD with the change described previously. This change will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

Interim Action

We consider this AD interim action. If final action is later identified, we may consider further rulemaking then.

Costs of Compliance

This AD affects about 700 airplanes of U.S. registry. The inspection takes about 1 work hour per airplane, at an average labor rate of \$80 per work hour. Based on these figures, the estimated cost of the AD for U.S. operators is \$56,000, or \$80 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

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.

We are 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

We have determined that 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) 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.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this AD and placed it in the AD docket. See the ADDRESSES section for a location to examine the regulatory evaluation.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of 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 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):



2007-06-18 Airbus: Amendment 39-14999. Docket No. FAA-2006-26272; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-153-AD.

Effective Date

- (a) This AD becomes effective April 27, 2007.

Affected ADs

- (b) None.

Applicability

- (c) This AD applies to all Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 airplanes, certificated in any category.

Unsafe Condition

- (d) This AD results from reports of slow operation of the main landing gear (MLG) door opening/closing sequence due to a defective actuator. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct defective actuators of the MLG door, which could result in slow operation of the MLG door and consequent non-extension of the MLG during an emergency freefall operation.

Compliance

- (e) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

Repetitive Inspections/Replacement

- (f) At the time specified in paragraph (f)(1) or (f)(2) of this AD, as applicable: Do a general visual inspection of the operation of the MLG door opening sequence to determine if a defective actuator is installed by doing all the applicable actions, including replacing the door actuator, as applicable, specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-32-1309, Revision 01, dated June 19, 2006. Do all applicable replacements before further flight. Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 900 flight cycles. Accomplishing the actions before the effective date of this AD in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-32-1309, dated March 7, 2006, is acceptable for compliance with the corresponding requirements in this paragraph.

(1) For airplanes on which a record of the total number of flight cycles on the MLG door actuator is available: Before the accumulation of 3,000 total flight cycles on the MLG door actuator, or within 800 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever is later.

(2) For airplanes on which a record of the total number of flight cycles on the MLG door actuator is not available: Within 800 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD.

Note 1: For the purposes of this AD, a general visual inspection is: "A visual examination of an interior or exterior area, installation, or assembly to detect obvious damage, failure, or irregularity. This level of inspection is made from within touching distance unless otherwise specified. A mirror may be necessary to enhance visual access to all exposed surfaces in the inspection area. This level of inspection is made under normally available lighting conditions such as daylight, hangar lighting, flashlight, or droplight and may require removal or opening of access panels or doors. Stands, ladders, or platforms may be required to gain proximity to the area being checked."

No Reporting/Parts Return Required

(g) Although the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A320-32-1309, Revision 01, dated June 19, 2006, specify submitting certain information to the manufacturer and sending defective actuators back to the component manufacturer for investigation, this AD does not include those requirements.

Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(h)(1) The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested in accordance with the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19.

(2) Before using any AMOC approved in accordance with § 39.19 on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify the appropriate principal inspector in the FAA Flight Standards Certificate Holding District Office.

Related Information

(i) European Aviation Safety Agency airworthiness directive 2006-0112, dated May 15, 2006, also addresses the subject of this AD.

Material Incorporated by Reference

(j) You must use Airbus Service Bulletin A320-32-1309, Revision 01, dated June 19, 2006, to perform the actions that are required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of this document in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Contact Airbus, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France, for a copy of this service information. You may review copies at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 13, 2007.

Ali Bahrami,

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. E7-5221 Filed 3-22-07; 8:45 am]