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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2012-0041; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-167-AD; Amendment 39-17037; AD 2012-09-02]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes

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

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus Model A300 B2-1C, B2K-3C, B2-203, B4-2C, B4-103, and B4-203 airplanes. This AD was prompted by analysis that in a specific failure case of the upper primary attachment of the trimmable horizontal stabilizer actuator (THSA), the THSA upper secondary attachment engaged because it could only withstand the loads for a limited period of time. This AD requires installing three secondary retention plates for the gimbal bearings on the THSA upper primary attachment. We are issuing this AD to prevent failure of the secondary load path, which could result in loss of control of the airplane.

DATES: This AD becomes effective June 7, 2012.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of June 7, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> or in person at the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-2125; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an AD that would apply to the specified products. That NPRM was published in the Federal Register on February 6, 2012 (77 FR 5726). That NPRM proposed to correct an unsafe condition for the specified products. The MCAI states:

A specific failure case of the THSA [trimmable horizontal stabilizer actuator] upper primary attachment, which may result in a loading of the upper secondary attachment, has been identified by analysis.

Primary load path failure can be caused by bearing migration from the upper attachment gimbal by failure or loss of a retention bolt.

In case of failure of the THSA upper primary attachment, the THSA upper secondary attachment would engage. Because the upper attachment secondary load path can only withstand the loads for a limited period of time, the condition where it would be engaged could lead, if not detected and corrected, to the failure of the secondary load path, which would likely result in loss of control of the aeroplane.

For the reasons explained above, this [EASA] AD requires installation of three secondary retention plates for the gimbal bearings on the THSA upper primary attachment.

You may obtain further information by examining the MCAI in the AD docket.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We received no comments on the NPRM (77 FR 5726, February 6, 2012) or on the determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

We reviewed the available data and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD as proposed, except for minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM (77 FR 5726, February 6, 2012) for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM (77 FR 5726, February 6, 2012).

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD will affect about 15 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it will take about 2 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Required parts will cost about \$6,541 per product. Where the service information lists required parts costs that are covered under warranty, we have assumed that there will be no charge for these parts. As we do not control warranty coverage for affected parties,

some parties may incur costs higher than estimated here. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of this AD to the U.S. operators to be \$100,665, or \$6,711 per product.

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 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 the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and
4. 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.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains the NPRM 77 FR 5726, February 6, 2012), the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

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 FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new AD:



2012-09-02 Airbus: Amendment 39-17037. Docket No. FAA-2012-0041; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-167-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) becomes effective June 7, 2012.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all Airbus Model A300 B2-1C, B2K-3C, B2-203, B4-2C, B4-103, and B4-203 airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 27: Flight controls.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by analysis that in a specific failure case of the upper primary attachment of the trimmable horizontal stabilizer actuator (THSA), the THSA upper secondary attachment engaged because it could only withstand the loads for a limited period of time. We are issuing this AD to prevent failure of the secondary load path, which could result in loss of control of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Actions

Within 30 months after the effective date of this AD, install 3 retention plates for the gimbal bearings on the THSA upper primary attachment, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-27-0204, dated March 11, 2011.

(h) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending

information directly to the International Branch, send it to Attn: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-2125; fax (425) 227-1149. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) Airworthy Product: For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

(i) Related Information

Refer to MCAI European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Airworthiness Directive 2011-0112, dated June 15, 2011; and Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-27-0204, dated March 11, 2011; for related information.

(j) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) You must use the following service information to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the following service information under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51:

(i) Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-27-0204, dated March 11, 2011.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS–EAW (Airworthiness Office), 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email account.airworth-eas@airbus.com; Internet <http://www.airbus.com>.

(3) You may review copies of the service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

(4) You may also review copies of the service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at an NARA facility, call 202-741-6030, or go to http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 23, 2012.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.