Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 95–NM–34–AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300–B2 and –B4 Series Airplanes Equipped With General Electric CF6–50 Series Engines or Pratt & Whitney JT9D–59A Engines

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 Airbus Model A300–B2 and –B4 series airplanes. This proposal would require an inspection to detect discrepancies of a certain thrust reverser control lever spring, an operational test to verify the integrity of the flight inhibition circuit of the thrust reverser system, and either correction of discrepancies or deactivation of the associated thrust reverser. This proposal is prompted by a report indicating that, due to broken and deformed thrust reverser control lever springs, an uncommanded movement of the thrust reverser lever to the unlock position and a ''reverser unlock'' amber warning occurred on one airplane. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect such broken or deformed control lever springs before they can lead to uncommanded deployment of a thrust reverser subsequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 28, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 95–NM–34–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen Slotte, Aerospace Engineer, Standardization Branch, ANM–113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (206) 227–2797; fax (206) 227–1320.

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 95–NM–34–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–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 95–NM–34–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, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Airbus Model A300–B2 and –B4 series airplanes equipped with General Electric CF6–50 series engines or Pratt & Whitney JT9D–59A engines. The DGAC advises that it has received a report indicating that, during a simulated engine failure, an uncommanded movement of the thrust reverser lever to the unlock position and a ''reverser unlock'' amber warning occurred. Investigation revealed that these failures were caused by broken and deformed (not in original shape) thrust reverser lever springs. This condition, if not corrected, could result in uncommanded deployment of a thrust reverser and subsequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

Airbus has issued All Operators Telex (AOT) 78–03, Revision 1, dated July 20, 1994, which describes procedures for:

1. Performing a mechanical integrity inspection to detect discrepancies of the thrust reverser control lever spring having part number (P/N) A2791294520000;
2. Performing an operational test to verify the integrity of the flight inhibition circuit of the thrust reverser system;
3. Replacing the thrust reverser control lever spring with a new spring or deactivating the associated thrust reverser, if the control lever spring is found broken or out of tolerance; and
4. Determining the origin of the malfunction, if the flight inhibition circuit of the thrust reverser system fails the operational test; and correcting discrepancies or deactivating the associated thrust reverser.

The DGAC classified this All Operators Telex as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 94–205–166(B), dated September 14, 1994, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

This airplane model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of § 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29)

and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the 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.

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 mechanical integrity inspection to detect discrepancies of the thrust reverser control lever spring having part number (P/N) A2791294520000, and an operational test to verify the integrity of the flight inhibition circuit of the thrust reverser system. It also requires the correction of discrepancies or deactivation of the associated thrust reverser. The actions are required to be accomplished in accordance with the All Operators Telex described previously.

The FAA estimates that 21 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 6 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is $60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately $55 per airplane. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $8,715, or $415 per airplane.

The total 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.

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. App. 1354(a), 1421 and 1423; 49 U.S.C. 106(g); and 14 CFR 11.89.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Airbus Industrie: Amendment 39– . Docket 95–NM–34–AD.

Applicability: Model A300–B2 and –B4 series airplanes, equipped with General Electric CF6–50 series engines or Pratt & Whitney JT9D–59A engines; 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 use the authority provided in paragraph (b) to request approval from the FAA. This approval may address either no action, if the current configuration eliminates the unsafe condition; or different actions necessary to address the unsafe condition described in this AD. Such a request should include an assessment of the effect of the changed configuration on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD. In no case does the presence of any modification, alteration, or repair remove any airplane from the applicability of this AD.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To ensure the detection of broken or deformed thrust reverser control lever springs that could lead to uncommanded deployment of a thrust reverser and subsequent reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 500 flight hours after the effective date of this AD, perform a mechanical integrity inspection to detect discrepancies of the thrust reverser control lever spring having part number (P/N) A2791294520000, and an operational test to verify the integrity of the flight inhibition circuit of the thrust reverser system, in accordance with Airbus All Operators Telex AOT 78–03, Revision 1, dated July 20, 1994.

(1) If no discrepancies are detected, no further action is required by this AD.

(2) If the control lever spring is found broken or out of tolerance, prior to further flight, replace it with a new control lever spring or deactivate the associated thrust reverser in accordance with the AOT.

(3) If the flight inhibition circuit of the thrust reverser system fails the operational test, prior to further flight, determine the origin of the malfunction, in accordance with the AOT.

(i) If the origin of the malfunction is identified, prior to further flight, repair the flight inhibition circuit in accordance with the AOT.

(ii) If the origin of the malfunction is not identified, prior to further flight, replace the relay having P/N 125GB or 124GB, and repeat the operational test, in accordance with the AOT. If the malfunction is still present, prior to further flight, inspect and repair the wiring in accordance with the AOT. If the malfunction is still present following the inspection and repair, prior to further flight, deactivate the associated thrust reverser in accordance with the AOT.

(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, Standardization Branch, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–113. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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 March 27, 1995.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 95–8078 Filed 3–31–95; 8:45 am]

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