

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. FAA-2019-0192; Product Identifier 2019-NM-004-AD; Amendment 39-19692; AD 2019-14-14]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS 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 SAS Model A300 B4-600, B4-600R, and F4-600R series airplanes, and Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes (collectively called Model A300-600 series airplanes); and Model A310 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by a determination that a certain aircraft maintenance manual (AMM) task provided instructions for a visual inspection of composite and metallic vertical tailplane (VTP) attachment fittings, but the inspection method did not specify detection of delamination length, which could possibly extend beyond the defined allowable limits. This AD requires a review of airplane maintenance records, and, depending on the results, one-time detailed and ultrasonic inspections of the affected parts and applicable corrective actions, as specified in a European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is incorporated by reference. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective September 19, 2019.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of September 19, 2019.

ADDRESSES: For the material incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact the EASA, at Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 1000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this IBR material at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available in the AD docket on the internet at <http://>

www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0192.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0192; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3225.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Discussion**

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all Airbus SAS Model A300 B4-600, B4-600R, and F4-600R series airplanes, and Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes (collectively called Model A300-600 series airplanes); and Model A310 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the **Federal Register** on April 15, 2019 (84 FR 15162). The NPRM was prompted by a determination that a certain AMM task provided instructions for a visual inspection of composite and metallic VTP attachment fittings, but the inspection method did not specify detection of delamination length, which could possibly extend beyond the defined allowable limits. The NPRM proposed to require a review of airplane maintenance records, and, depending on the results, one-time detailed and ultrasonic inspections of the affected parts and applicable corrective actions.

The FAA is issuing this AD to address VTP attachment fittings that could be delaminated beyond allowable limits, which, if not detected and corrected, could lead to failure of the VTP attachment fittings, possibly resulting in loss of control of the airplane.

The EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2019-0006, dated January 17, 2019 (“EASA AD 2019-0006”) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing

Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus SAS Model A300-600 series airplanes and Model A310 series airplanes. The MCAI states:

AMM Task 55-36-11 provides instructions for visual inspection of composite and metallic VTP attachment fittings, and contains detailed information on damage limits. As defined in this AMM task, a composite part delamination is acceptable without further repair. However, as the inspection method included in the AMM does not allow detection of delamination length, this may consequently pass over the allowable limits defined.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to failure of the VTP attachment fittings, possibly resulting in loss of control of the aeroplane.

Prompted by this potential unsafe condition, Airbus issued the applicable SB [service bulletin] to provide non-destructive test instructions, which allow detection of delaminated area(s) before exceeding the limits.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires a review of maintenance records and, depending on the result, a one-time detailed inspection (DET) of the affected parts, followed by an ultrasonic (US) inspection, and, depending on findings, accomplishment of applicable corrective action(s).

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0192.

Comments

The FAA gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this final rule. The following presents the comment received on the NPRM and the FAA’s response to that comment.

Request To Clarify Corrective Action

FedEx requested clarification regarding the corrective action specified in paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2019-0006. FedEx noted that paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2019-0006 directs operators to contact Airbus for corrective action instructions if any discrepancies are detected during the inspections specified in EASA AD 2019-0006. FedEx recommended to revise the proposed AD to state that Airbus should only be contacted for repair instructions if damage or delamination is found outside of the allowable damage limits, as specified in structural repair manual (SRM) 55-30-00 during the inspection specified in paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2019-0006. FedEx reasoned that clarifying the corrective action could allow operators to complete the repairs themselves for damage or delamination that are within the allowable damage limits, and that Airbus would only be