Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued All Operators Telex (AOT) 78–05, Revision 01, dated February 8, 1995, which describes procedures for a one-time inspection to detect defects of the DPV; and replacement of the defective DPV with a new DPV, or deactivation of the thrust reverser system, if necessary. The DGAC classified this AOT as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 95–052–176(B), dated March 15, 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 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.

Explanation of the Requirements 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, the proposed AD would require a one-time inspection to detect defects of the DPV. If a defective DPV is detected, it would be required to be replaced with a new DPV, or thrust reverser system would be required to be deactivated until the DPV is replaced. The inspection and replacement actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the AOT described previously.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 43 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 10 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed one-time inspection, 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 $25,800, or $600 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 USC 106(g), 40113, 44701.

**§ 39.13 [Amended]**

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

Airbus Industrie: Docket 95–NM–175–AD.

*Applicability:* Model A300B4–601, –603, –605R, A300–F4–605R, and A310–203, –203C, –204, –304, –308 series airplanes, equipped with General Electric Model CF6–80 engines; on which General Electric Service Bulletin 78–031 has been accomplished; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise 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 (b) 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 prevent uncommanded deployment and stowage of the thrust reverser during maintenance activities, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 600 flight hours after the effective date of this AD, perform an inspection to detect defects of the directional pilot valves (DPV) in accordance with Airbus All Operators Telex (AOT) 78–05, Revision 01, February 8, 1995.

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

(2) If any defect is detected, prior to further flight, either replace the defective DPV with a new DPV in accordance with the AOT; or deactivate the thrust reverser system in accordance with approved procedures of the Minimum Equipment List (MEL) until the DPV is replaced

(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, ANM–113, 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, 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 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 April 23, 1996.

S. R. Miller,

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

[FR Doc. 96–10509 Filed 4–26–96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–13–P**

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## 14 CFR Part 39

**[Docket No. 95–NM–109–AD]**

**RIN 2120–AA64**

## Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 B2 and B4 Series Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes the supersedure of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A300 B2 and B4 series airplanes, that currently requires inspection for cracks of the fuselage, wings, and vertical stabilizer structures; and repairs or modifications, if necessary. That AD was prompted by reports of cracking in several areas of the fuselage, wings, and vertical stabilizer structure due to fatigue-related stress. The actions specified by that AD are intended to prevent such fatigue-related cracking, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage, wing, and vertical stabilizer. This action would provide for a new optional terminating action, for certain airplanes, and would expand the applicability of the existing AD to include additional airplanes.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by June 10, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 95–NM–109–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 Airbus, 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:** Phil Forde, Aerospace Engineer, Standardization Branch, ANM–113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (206) 227–2146; fax (206) 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 95–NM–109–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–109–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

On August 13, 1986, the FAA issued AD 86–19–02, amendment 39–5396 (51 FR 29910, August 21, 1986), applicable to certain Airbus Model A300 B2 and B4 series airplanes. That AD requires inspections for cracks of the fuselage, wings, and vertical stabilizer structures; and repairs or modifications, if necessary. That action was prompted by reports that, during fatigue tests conducted by the manufacturer, cracks were detected in several areas of the fuselage, wings, and vertical stabilizer structure. The requirements of that AD are intended to prevent reduced structural integrity of the fuselage, wing, and vertical stabilizer.

Explanation of New Relevant Service Information

Since the issuance of that AD, Airbus has issued Revision 3 of Service Bulletin A300–53–182, dated March 16, 1994. The inspection procedures described in this revision are identical to those described in the original version of the service bulletin, which was referenced in AD 86–19–02 as the appropriate source of service information. However, this new revision of the service bulletin differs in two ways from the original version:

1. The effectivity listing in the revised bulletin includes additional airplanes that are subject to the addressed unsafe condition.

2. For certain airplanes, the revised service bulletin provides procedures for replacement of the web plate and support fitting at the level of stringer 18 (left- and right-hand) with a new web plate and support fitting. Accomplishment of the replacement would eliminate the need for the repetitive inspections in the web plate between frame 30A and frame 32 at stringer 18.

The Direction Generale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive (CN) 83–102–053(B)R2, dated March 2, 1994, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

Explanation of the Provisions of the Proposed Rule

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 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 supersede AD 86–19–02 to continue to require inspections for cracks of the fuselage, wings, and vertical stabilizer structures; and repairs or modifications, if necessary. However, the applicability of the rule would be expanded to include additional airplanes that have been identified as subject to the addressed unsafe condition.

For certain airplanes, the proposed AD would provide for a new optional replacement action, which would constitute terminating action for certain repetitive inspection requirements. These actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

Operators who previously elected to accomplish Airbus Modification 1691 to terminate the repetitive inspections at stringers 18 and 22, as was provided by paragraph D. of AD 86–19–02, should note that, under the provisions of paragraph (d)(4) of this proposal, accomplishment of that modification

would constitute terminating action for the repetitive inspections only at stringer 22.

Additionally, operators should note that paragraph G. of AD 86–19–02 has not been retained in this proposal. That paragraph required ultrasonic inspections of the longitudinal lap joints at stringer 29 between frames 72 and 73, and eddy current inspections of the longitudinal skin splices of the top fuselage joint between frames 72 and 80. The FAA has issued a separate rulemaking action to address those requirements (reference notice of proposed rulemaking, Docket No. 94–NM–246–AD).

Cost Impact

Approximately 7 Airbus Model A300 B2 and B4 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

The actions that are currently required by AD 86–19–02 take approximately 919 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. The cost of required parts will be nominal. Based on these figures, the cost impact on U.S. operators of the actions currently required is estimated to be $385,980, or $55,140 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The new actions that are proposed in this AD action would take approximately 3 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact on U.S. operators of the proposed requirements of this AD is estimated to be $1,260, or $180 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the current or 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 removing amendment 39–5396 (51 FR 29910, August 21, 1986), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), to read as follows:

Airbus Industrie: Docket 95–NM–109–AD. Supersedes AD 86–19–02, Amendment 39–5396.

*Applicability:* All Model A300 B2 and B4 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 otherwise 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 (j) 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.

Note 2: Airbus Model A300–600 series airplanes are not subject to this AD.

*Compliance:* Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent fatigue-related cracking, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage, wing, and vertical stabilizer, accomplish the following:

(a) For airplanes with serial numbers listed in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–127, Revision 4, dated May 10, 1984: Perform a visual inspection to detect cracks in the upper fuselage skin at frame 58 between stringer 5 left and stringer 5 right, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph.

(1) Perform the initial inspection at the later of the times specified in paragraph (a)(1)(i) or (a)(1)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Prior to the accumulation of 18,000 total landings or 18,000 total flight hours, whichever occurs earlier; or

(ii) Within one year after September 26, 1986 (the effective date of AD 86–19–02, amendment 39–5396).

(2) If no crack is detected, repeat this inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 flight hours.

(3) If any crack is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with Figure 2, ''Inspection and Repair Alternative Chart,'' of the service bulletin.

(4) Installation of Airbus Modification 2147 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–110, Revision 10, dated April 7, 1986) or Airbus Modification 2526/1693 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–128, Revision 5, dated May 10, 1984) constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (a)(2) of this AD.

(b) For airplanes with serial numbers listed in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–101, Revision 7, dated May 10, 1984: Perform a radiographic and ultrasonic inspection to detect cracks in the circumferential fuselage splice plates and stringer couplings, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph.

(1) Perform the initial inspections at the applicable time specified in paragraph (b)(1)(i) or (b)(1)(ii) of this AD:

(i) For airplanes on which the actions specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–053, Revision 2, dated July 30, 1981, have been accomplished previously: Inspect prior to the accumulation of 20,000 landings since accomplishment of those actions, or within one year after September 26, 1986, whichever occurs later.

(ii) For airplanes on which the actions specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–053, Revision 2, dated July 30, 1981, have not been accomplished: Inspect prior to the accumulation of 18,000 total landings, or within one year after September 26, 1986, whichever occurs later.

(2) If no crack is detected, repeat the inspections thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 landings.

(3) If any crack is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with Figures 1 and 2 of the service bulletin.

(4) Installation of Airbus Modification 3760 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–170, Revision 1, dated January 25, 1985) constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (b)(2) of this AD.

(c) For airplanes with serial numbers listed in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–143, Revision 3, dated May 10, 1984: Perform a visual inspection to detect cracks in frame

57A between stringers 15 and 16 (left- and right-hand), and the stringer 5 connection angle at frame 65 (left- and right-hand), in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph. .

(1) Perform the initial inspection at the later of the times specified in paragraph (b)(1)(i) or (b)(1)(ii) of this AD:

(i) Prior to the accumulation of 20,000 total landings; or

(ii) Within one year after September 26, 1986.

(2) If no crack is detected, repeat this inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 landings.

(3) If any crack is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with the service bulletin.

(4) Installation of Airbus Modification 2643 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–132, Revision 4, dated May 10, 1984) constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirement of paragraph (c)(2) of this AD.

(d) For airplanes having serial number 002 through 156 inclusive, on which Airbus Modification 2611 has not been installed: Perform a visual inspection, and liquid penetrant test if applicable, to detect cracks in the web plate and support fitting between frames 30A and 32 at stringer 18, and between stringers 22 and 23 (left- and right-hand), in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–182, Revision 3, dated March 16, 1994, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph.

(1) Perform the initial inspection at the later of the times specified in paragraph (d)(1)(i) or (d)(1)(ii) of this AD:

(i) Prior to the accumulation of 30,000 total landings; or

(ii) Within 1,500 landings after the effective date of this AD.

(2) If no crack is detected, repeat the inspection at the applicable intervals specified in paragraph (d)(2)(i) or (d)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(i) If, at the time of the most recent inspection, the airplane has accumulated fewer than 36,000 total landings, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 landings.

(ii) If, at the time of the most recent inspection, the airplane has accumulated 36,000 or more total landings, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 2,000 landings.

(3) If any crack is detected in the web plate between frames 30A and 32 at stringer 18, prior to further flight, replace the web plate and support fitting at stringer 18 (left- and right-hand) with a new web plate and support fitting, in accordance with the service bulletin. Accomplishment of this replacement constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements for stringer 18 as required by paragraph (d)(2) of this AD.

(4) If any crack is detected in the web plate between frame 30A and 32 between stringers 22 and 23, prior to further flight, replace the web plate and support fitting between stringers 22 and 23 (left- and right-hand) with a new web plate and support fitting, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–182, Revision 3, dated March 16, 1994. Accomplishment of this replacement constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements for the subject area between stringers 22 and 23 as required by paragraph (d)(2) of this AD.

(5) Terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (d)(2) of this AD is as follows:

(i) Installation of Airbus Modification 1691 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–063) between stringers 22 and 23 constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (d)(2) of this AD for that area only.

(ii) Replacement of the web plates and support fittings at the level of stringer 18 (left- and right-hand) with a new web plate and support fitting, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–182, Revision 3, dated March 16, 1994, constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (d)(2) of this AD for that stringer only.

(iii) Accomplishment of the actions specified in both paragraph (d)(5)(i) and paragraph (d)(5)(ii) of this AD constitute terminating action for all repetitive inspection requirements required by paragraph (d)(2) of this AD.

(e) For airplanes with serial numbers listed in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–112, Revision 2, dated July 20, 1981: Perform a visual inspection to detect cracks of the skin from frame 28 to frame 31 between stringers 29 and 31 (left- and right-hand), in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph.

(1) Perform the initial inspection at the later of the times specified in paragraph (e)(1)(i) or (e)(1)(ii) of this AD:

(i) Prior to the accumulation of 24,000 total landings; or

(ii) Within one year after September 26, 1986.

(2) If no crack is detected, repeat the inspection at the applicable intervals specified in paragraph (e)(2)(i) or (e)(2)(ii) of this AD:

(i) If, at the time of the most recent inspection, the airplane has accumulated fewer than 36,000 total landings, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 6,000 landings.

(ii) If, at the time of the most recent inspection, the airplane has accumulated 36,000 or more total landings, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 landings.

(3) If any crack is found, prior to further flight, install Airbus Modification 1358 in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–027, Revision 4, dated January 4, 1984. Accomplishment of this modification constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (e)(2) of this AD.

(4) Installation of Airbus Modification 1358 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–027, Revision 4, dated January 4, 1984) constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (e)(2) of this AD.

(f) For airplanes with serial numbers listed in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–100, Revision 1, dated May 10, 1984: Perform an internal and external visual inspection to detect cracks of the longitudinal joint at stringer 51 (left- and right-hand) between frames 72 and 80, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph.

(1) Perform the initial inspection at the later of the times specified in paragraph (f)(1)(i) or (f)(1)(ii) of this AD:

(i) Prior to the accumulation of 12,000 total landings or 15,000 total flight hours, whichever occurs earlier; or

(ii) Within one year after September 26, 1986.

(2) If no crack is found, repeat the internal inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 1,500 flight hours, and repeat the external inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 12,000 flight hours.

(3) If any crack is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with the service bulletin.

(4) Installation of Airbus Modification 1421 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–53–033, Revision 3, dated May 10, 1984) constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (f)(2) of this AD.

(g) For airplanes with serial numbers listed in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–55–026, Revision 3, dated May 10, 1984: Perform a visual inspection of the 6 vertical stabilizer attachment fittings for cracks, which initiate from the rivet holes, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph.

(1) Perform the initial inspection at the later of the times specified in paragraph (g)(1)(i) or (g)(1)(ii) of this AD:

(i) Prior to the accumulation of 20,000 total landings or 20,000 total flight hours, whichever occurs earlier; or

(ii) Within one year after September 26, 1986, whichever occurs earlier.

(2) If no crack is detected, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 1,500 landings.

(3) If any crack is detected, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with the service bulletin.

(4) Installation of Airbus Modification 3172 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–55–024, Revision 4, dated May 25, 1984) constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (g)(2) of this AD.

(h) For airplanes with serial numbers listed in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–57–109, Revision 1, dated July 10, 1982: Perform a visual inspection to detect cracks in the landing angle attached to the outboard side of the wing leading edge at nose rib 8 (left- and right-hand), in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, and in accordance with the times specified in this paragraph.

(1) Perform the initial inspecton at the later of the times specified in paragraph (h)(1)(i) or (h)(1)(ii):

(i) Prior to the accumulation of 15,000 total landings; or

(ii) Within one year after September 26, 1986.

(2) If no crack is detected, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 landings.

(3) If any crack is detected, within the next 1,000 landings following crack detection, install Airbus Modification 1307 in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–57–026, Revision 3, dated October 21, 1982.

(4) Installation of Airbus Modification 1307 (reference Airbus Service Bulletin A300–57–026, Revision 3, dated October 21, 1982) constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (h)(2) of this AD.

(i) 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.

(j) 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, ANM–113, 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, Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 23, 1996.

S.R. Miller,

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

[FR Doc. 96–10508 Filed 4–26–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

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## 14 CFR Part 39

**[Docket No. 95–NM–267–AD]**

**RIN 2120–AA64**

## Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A320–200 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 certain Airbus Model A320–200 series airplanes. This proposal would require modification of the shock absorber sub-assembly of the main landing gear (MLG). This proposal is prompted by reports of internal damage to the shock absorber sub-assembly due to loose screws in the upper bearing dowels. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent such damage, which could result in the overextension of the shock absorber and failure of the torque link. This situation may lead to the inability of the MLG to retract and subsequent collapse of the MLG.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by June 10, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 95–NM–267–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 Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; or Dowty Aerospace, Customer Support Center, P.O. Box 49, Sterling, Virginia 20166.

This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Tim Backman, Aerospace Engineer, Standardization Branch, ANM–113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (206) 227–2797; fax (206) 227–1149.

**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 95–NM–267–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–267–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 A320–200 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that it has received reports of internal damage to the shock absorber sub-assembly of the main landing gear (MLG). Investigation revealed that, due to an improper fit, the screws in the upper bearing dowels of the shock absorber sub-assembly can become loose and come out of position.

A loose screw in the upper bearing dowels can come out and cause internal damage to the shock absorber tube assembly. If this were to occur, the shock absorber sub-assembly may overextend and the torque link may fail, which could result in the inability of the MLG to retract and the subsequent collapse of the MLG.

### Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A320–32–1144, dated December 8, 1994, which describes procedures for modification of the shock absorber sub-assembly of the MLG. The modification involves installing new dowels and a retaining ring to the shock absorber assembly. The modification will reduce the possibility of internal damage to the sub-assembly. (The Airbus service bulletin references Dowty Service Bulletin 200–32–215, dated July 7, 1994, and Dowty Service Bulletin 200–32–216, Revision 1, dated August 4, 1994, as additional sources of service information for accomplishment of these procedures.) The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive (CN) 95–016–063 (B), dated January 18, 1995, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.