Proposed Rules

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-03-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300–600 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 all Airbus Model A300-600 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections to detect cracks in the bottom skin of the wing in the area of the cutout for the pylon rear attachment fitting, and repair, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by a report indicating that, during full-scale fatigue testing, a crack was found in the bottom skin of the wing at the cutout for the aft pylon attachment fitting due to fatigue-related stress. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent such fatigue-related cracking, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing.

DATES: Comments must be received by June 12, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 95–NM– 03–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. 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–03–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–03–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 all Airbus Model Federal Register Vol. 60, No. 84 Tuesday, May 2, 1995

A300–600 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that, during full scale fatigue testing, a crack was found in the bottom skin of the wing at the cut out for the aft pylon attachment fitting after the airplane accumulated approximately 58,650 total simulated flights. Investigation revealed that such cracking was caused by fatigue-related stress. Such fatigue-related cracking, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing.

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A300–57–6028, Revision 3, dated September 13, 1994, which describes procedures for repetitive detailed visual inspections to detect cracks in the bottom skin of the wing in the area of the cut out for the pylon rear attachment fitting, and repair, if necessary. The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 94–069–158(B), dated March 30, 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 repetitive detailed visual inspections to detect cracks in the wing bottom skin of the wing in the area of the cut out for the pylon rear attachment fitting, and repair, if necessary. The inspection actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously. Any necessary repair of the wing bottom skin would be required to be accomplished in accordance with a method approved by the FAA.

As a result of recent communications with the Air Transport Association