

FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance for this AD.

(2) Alternative methods of compliance, approved previously per AD 2001-08-26, amendment 39-12203, are approved as alternative methods of compliance with paragraph (a) of this AD.

Note 1: The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 2001-508(B), dated October 17, 2001.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on September 12, 2003.

Ali Bahrami,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002-NM-09-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330 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 A330 series airplanes. This proposal would require replacement of the elevator servo-controls with new servo-controls when the existing parts have reached their operational life limit. This action is necessary to prevent hydraulic leakage and internal damage of the elevator servo-controls due to cracks in the end caps and along the barrel. These conditions could result in a reduction in the elevator's protection against vibration or loss of the hydraulic circuit, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by October 20, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-09-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. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227-1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: 9-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2002-NM-09-AD" in the subject line and need not be submitted in triplicate. Comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 or 2000 or ASCII text.

Information pertaining to this 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: Tom Groves, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-1503; fax (425) 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 action may be changed in light of the comments received.

Submit comments using the following format:

- Organize comments issue-by-issue. For example, discuss a request to change the compliance time and a request to change the service bulletin reference as two separate issues.

- For each issue, state what specific change to the proposed AD is being requested.

- Include justification (*e.g.*, reasons or data) for each request.

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 action must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 2002-NM-09-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-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-09-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, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Airbus Model A330 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that the operational life limits for the servo-controls located on the elevator, which are listed in Revision 8, chapter 05-11-00, configuration 1, of the Aircraft Maintenance Manual (AMM), dated September 15, 1999, are not addressed by section 9.1 of the Airworthiness Limitations section, which replaces chapter 05-11-00 of the AMM. Thus, it is possible that elevator servo-controls that have reached their operational life limit may remain installed on an airplane. Elevator servo-controls that have exceeded their operational life limits may develop cracks in the end caps and along the barrel, which could lead to hydraulic leakage and internal damage within the servo-control. This condition, if not corrected, could result in a reduction in the elevator's protection against vibration or loss of the hydraulic circuit, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

Explanation of Action Taken by the DGAC

The DGAC issued French airworthiness directive 2001-545(B), dated November 14, 2001, to establish operational life limits for the elevator servo-controls. The French airworthiness directive requires replacement of the elevator servo-controls with new servo-controls when the operational life limit for the servo-controls has been reached.

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