

pollution control to U.S. industry over the cost of current methods, thus enhancing the ability of industry to meet strict air emission standards;

(3) Workers involved with the devices will be protected from the low levels of radiation exposure by a metal housing encasing the thorium-bearing material;

(4) The devices are manufactured in Japan, so no U.S. workers will have direct contact with the thorium-bearing material; and

(5) The long-term effect on the environment would be "reduced emissions of air pollutants from mobile and stationary combustion sources", and the petitioner states that the device "could also lead to a reduction in the volume of hydrocarbon fuels used."

In addition, the petitioner explains that the public is protected by housings shielding the radiation-emitting material, and that the housings are designed not to be "readily disassembled by the curious." The petitioner states the product will have warning labels which instruct users in the proper disposal method, which is only by return of the product to the distributor; the petitioner anticipates that these labels would prevent long-term negative effects on the environment. The petitioner notes that disposal instructions would also be in the "Material Safety Data Sheet" delivered with each device.

The Petitioner projects the product to have a 30-year life cycle, and expects no short-term negative effects on the environment from disposal of the devices. The petitioner believes that the product is a safe and cost-effective method for contributing to the reduction of air pollution chemicals in the air in the United States and claims that it poses no adverse risk to the public or to workers involved in installing or removing the devices.

#### Relevant Technical Information

The petitioner states that Honda Motor Company is currently installing the technology as a factory-installed device on their diesel-powered vehicles, and claims use of this technology in Japan has demonstrated a reduction of air pollution chemicals and a reduction in fuel consumption. The petitioner submits test data showing reductions of soot emissions after installation of the device on diesel bus engines on the Okayama Bus Line company and a Caterpillar/Mitsubishi diesel-powered shovel. The petitioner also submits data showing reductions in nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and hydrocarbons for a 1989 gasoline-fueled Mercedes Benz, and similar data for a 1998 Mitsubishi van. The petitioner also presents "fuel

usage reduction examples" comparing various makes and models of vehicles before and after installation of the catalytic device. The petitioner's data claims fuel savings ranging from 53.96 percent for a Mitsubishi Minicar to 8.19 percent for a Mitsubishi truck.

#### Conclusion

The petitioner believes that the proposed change to the Commission's regulations to allow the use of catalytic devices containing thorium in the United States is appropriate because it will benefit citizens by increasing the efficiency of combustion processes, reducing the use of hydrocarbon fuels, and lowering air pollutant emissions. The petitioner concludes that this technology poses no hazard to users or the public.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 7th day of October, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Andrew L. Bates,**

*Acting Secretary of the Commission.*

[FR Doc. 03-25986 Filed 10-14-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7590-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002-NM-49-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 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 A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections of the left- and right-side main landing gear (MLG) side-stay cuff lugs and down-lock spring attachments for evidence of cracked or fractured side-stay cuff lugs or down-lock spring attachments, and repair if necessary. This action would also provide for optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections. This action is necessary to prevent failure of the MLG side-stay cuff lugs or down-lock spring attachments, which could result in improper down-lock of the MLG during a freefall extension, and possible collapse of the MLG. This action is

intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by November 14, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-49-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. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227-1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: [9-ann-nprmcomment@faa.gov](mailto:9-ann-nprmcomment@faa.gov). Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2002-NM-49-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.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Airbus Industries, 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:** Tim Dulin, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2141; 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.