

and reaming fastener holes to the oversize start diameter, performing rotating probe inspections to detect cracking around fasteners holes, repairing cracked areas, and cold expanding the fastener holes). Accomplishment of this service bulletin on airplanes on which no cracking is detected eliminates the need for the repetitive inspections specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A320-53-1030, Revision 01. Installation of any repair/modification kit in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of either service bulletin eliminates the need for the repetitive inspections of the repaired/modified area specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A300-53-1030, Revision 01.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A300-53-1030, Revision 01, is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 2000-531-155(B), dated December 27, 2000, to ensure 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 Requirements of Proposed AD

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 accomplishment of the actions specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A300-53-1030, Revision 01, described previously, except as discussed below. This proposed AD also would provide for optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections.

Consistent with the findings of the DGAC, the proposed AD would allow repetitive inspections to continue in lieu of the terminating action, provided no cracking is found during any inspection. In making this

determination, we considered that long-term continued operational safety in this case will be adequately ensured by repetitive inspections to detect cracking before it represents a hazard to the airplane.

Differences Between the Service Information and the Proposed AD

Although the service bulletins specify that operators may contact the manufacturer for disposition of certain repair conditions, this proposal would require operators to repair those conditions per a method approved by either the FAA or the DGAC (or its delegated agent). In light of the type of repair that would be required to address the unsafe condition, and consistent with existing bilateral airworthiness agreements, we have determined that, for this proposed AD, a repair approved by either the FAA or the DGAC would be acceptable for compliance with this proposed AD.

No Flight With Cracks

Unlike Airbus Service Bulletin A300-53-1030, Revision 01, this proposed AD would not permit further flight if any cracking is detected, regardless of crack length, around the fasteners that attach the pressure panel to the flexible bracket at frame 36, adjacent to the longitudinal beams on the left and right sides of the airplane. We have determined that, because of the safety implications and consequences associated with such cracking, any cracking must be repaired before further flight.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 24 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

For airplanes without a center fuel tank, it would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the proposed detailed inspection, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed detailed inspection is estimated to be \$65 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

For airplanes with a center fuel tank, it would take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed rotating probe inspection at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed inspection is estimated to \$130 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The cost impact figures discussed above are 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. The cost impact figures discussed in AD rulemaking actions represent only the time necessary to perform the specific actions actually required by the AD. These figures typically do not include incidental costs, such as the time required to gain access and close up, planning time, or time necessitated by other administrative actions.

Should an operator elect to perform the optional terminating action, it would take approximately 12 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed cold work modification, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. The cost of required parts is \$650. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the optional terminating action is estimated to be \$1,430 per airplane.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have a substantial direct effect 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, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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.