

# Proposed Rules

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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. 2001–NM–380–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330–301, –321, –322, –341, and –342 Series Airplanes; and Model A340 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 A330–301, –321, –322, –341, and –342 series airplanes; and certain Model A340 series airplanes. This proposal would require inspecting for and repairing cracks of the wire harness slots in the inner rear spars of the wings between ribs 4 and 5, and cold-expanding crack-free wire harness slots and bolt holes. This action is necessary to prevent cracking of the wire harness slot, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by December 29, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001–NM–380–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-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov](mailto:9-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov). Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain “Docket No. 2001–NM–380–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, 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:** Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–2125; 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 2001–NM–380–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. 2001–NM–380–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 certain Airbus Model A330–301, –321, –322, –341, and –342 series airplanes; and certain Model A340 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that major wing fatigue tests revealed cracks initiating from the wire harness slot in the inner rear spars of the wings between ribs 4 and 5. The cracking can occur on airplanes that have not been modified to reinforce the wire harness slot and the adjacent holes. The results indicate that the fatigue life for the wire harness slot is less than the design requirement. Cracks in the wire harness slot, if not corrected, could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing.

#### Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletins A330–57–3055 and A340–57–4062, both Revision 01, dated May 2, 2002. The service bulletins describe procedures for a modification of the inner rear spars of the wings. The modification involves an eddy current surface crack inspection of the wire harness slots in the rear spars of the wings between ribs 4 and 5, a high-frequency eddy current rototest inspection for cracks in the area around the bolt holes that attach the support plates of the electrical connectors, and cold-expansion of the wire harness slots and the bolt holes. The service bulletins recommend contacting Airbus if cracks are found. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletins is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The DGAC