

is necessary, operators are instructed to contact Airbus for repair instructions.

For Model A300–600 series airplanes, Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A310–53–6129, Revision 02, dated December 13, 2001, which describes procedures for repetitive ultrasonic inspections to detect cracking in skin lap joints located above the mid-passenger doors, and repair if necessary.

For Model A310 series airplanes, Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A310–53–2112, dated December 26, 2000, which describes procedures for repetitive ultrasonic inspections to detect cracking in skin lap joints located below the aft passenger door, and repair if necessary.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletins are intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

FAA's Conclusions

These airplane models are manufactured in France and are 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 actions are necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

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 supersede AD 2000–02–39 to continue to require either a one-time ultrasonic inspection, or repetitive visual inspections and eventual ultrasonic inspection, to detect cracking of the longitudinal skin splice above the mid-passenger door panels, and corrective actions if necessary. The proposed AD would also require repetitive ultrasonic inspections to detect cracking of certain skin lap joints in additional areas of the fuselage, and repair if necessary. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletins described previously, except as discussed below.

Explanation of Change Made to Existing Requirements

The FAA has changed all references to a “detailed visual inspection” in the existing AD to “detailed inspection” in this action.

Explanation of Change to Applicability

In this proposed AD the FAA has revised the applicability of affected Airbus Model A300 series airplanes to “Airbus Model A300 B2 Series Airplanes” and “Airbus Model A300 B4 Series Airplanes” to match the most recent type certificate data sheet for the affected models.

Also, for Model A300 series airplanes, the applicability of the existing AD includes serial numbers “1 through 156 inclusive.” In this action the applicability for Airbus Model A300 B2 and B4 series airplanes has been changed to include serial numbers “0003 through 0156 inclusive.” The airplanes with serial numbers 1 and 2 were destroyed by the manufacturer.

No Flight With Cracks

Airbus Service Bulletins A300–53–0354, Revision 02; A300–53–0356; and A300–53–6129, Revision 02; allow flight with cracking of certain lengths, as specified in the applicable service bulletin. This proposed AD would not allow flight with any cracking, regardless of crack length. We have determined that because of the safety implications and consequences associated with such cracking, any cracking must be repaired before further flight.

Difference Between the Proposed AD and the Service Information

Operators should note that, although the service bulletins specify that the manufacturer may be contacted for disposition of certain repair conditions and repetitive inspections after a final repair, this proposal would require the repair of those conditions to be accomplished in accordance with 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 identified unsafe condition, and consonance with existing bilateral airworthiness agreements, the FAA has 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.

Cost Impacts

There are approximately 128 airplanes of U.S. registry that would be affected by this proposed AD.

The ultrasonic inspection that is currently required by AD 2000–02–39 takes approximately 4 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the currently required actions is estimated to be \$260 per airplane.

The detailed inspection that is currently required by AD 2000–01–39 takes approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the currently required actions is estimated to be \$130 per airplane.

The ultrasonic inspection that is proposed in this AD action would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish, at an average rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this proposed inspection on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$8,320, or \$65 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the current or 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.

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