

new or serviceable parts. The actions specified by that AD are intended to detect damage to the fuel pump and fuel pump canister, which could result in loss of flame trap capability and could provide a fuel ignition source in the center fuel tank.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued All Operators Telex (AOT) A300-600-28A6075, dated February 20, 2003, which describes procedures for the following:

- A one-time detailed inspection to detect cracks, fretting, and other damage of the lower part of the pump diffuser guide slots (bayonet) of the center tank fuel pumps and the bottom of the pump diffuser housings; and replacement of any damaged pump and its corresponding fuel pump canister with new parts.

- A one-time detailed inspection to detect cracks of the center tank fuel pump canisters, and replacement of any cracked fuel pump canister and its corresponding fuel pump with new parts.

- Repetitive detailed inspections to detect damage of the fuel pumps, and replacement of any damaged pump with a new part.

- Repetitive nondestructive test (NDT) inspections to detect damage of the fuel pump canisters, and replacement of any damaged canister with a new part. Replacement of a canister would reset the inspection schedule for the next inspection to 7,000 flight cycles, to be repeated within 1,500-flight-cycle intervals. Replacement of a canister eliminates the need to reinspect the fuel pumps.

- A report of the findings for each inspection.

The DGAC classified this AOT as mandatory and issued French telegraphic airworthiness directive 2003-085 (B), dated February 21, 2003, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

Airbus AOT A300-600-28A6075 refers to Airbus Alert Service Bulletin A300-28A6061, Revision 04, dated August 1, 2002, as an additional source of service information for accomplishment of the NDT inspections.

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 action is 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 require accomplishment of the actions specified in and in accordance with the AOT described previously, except as discussed under "Differences Between Proposed AD and AOT/French Airworthiness Directive." This proposed AD would also require that operators report their findings to the manufacturer.

Differences Between Proposed AD and AOT/French Airworthiness Directive

The DGAC issued French airworthiness directive 2003-085 (B) as "telegraphic." The FAA agrees that the unsafe condition could warrant immediate attention but finds it unnecessary to immediately adopt this rule. At the time of issuance, this proposed AD would affect only two airplanes. The FAA has been advised that the one-time detailed inspections specified in paragraph (a) of this proposed AD (with a proposed compliance time of 15 days) have been accomplished for both affected airplanes. Furthermore, the proposed compliance time for the repetitive inspections is long enough to provide notice and the opportunity for public comment on the proposed rule.

The applicability/effectivity for the French airworthiness directive/AOT includes A300 B4-600 and A300 C4-600 series airplanes, which are identified as "A300-600 aircraft without a fuel trim tank system (pre-production Mod 4801)." The only Model A300 C4-600 airplane listed on the type certificate data sheet is the A300 C4-605 Variant F. Therefore, the applicability of this proposed AD is Model A300 B4-601, A300 B4-603, A300 B4-620, and A300 C4-605 Variant F series airplanes; except those equipped with a fuel trim tank system.

The French airworthiness directive excludes certain airplanes (serial numbers 546, 553, 618, and 623) that "have already been inspected per Airbus Alert Service Bulletin A300-28A6061." However, that inspection

must be repeated at regular intervals. The FAA finds that those airplanes are still subject to the identified unsafe condition and should be included in the applicability of this proposed AD.

Interim Action

This is considered to be interim action. The inspection reports that would be required by this proposed AD would enable the manufacturer to obtain better insight into the nature, cause, and extent of the fuel pump damage, and eventually to develop final action to address the unsafe condition. Once final action has been identified, the FAA may consider further rulemaking.

Changes to 14 CFR Part 39/Effect on the Proposed AD

On July 10, 2002, the FAA published a new version of 14 CFR 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs the FAA's AD system. This regulation now includes material that relates to altered products, special flight permits, and alternative methods of compliance (AMOCs). This proposed AD does not include this material; however, the office authorized to approve AMOCs is identified in paragraph (d).

Change to Labor Rate Estimate

We have reviewed the figures we have used over the past several years to calculate AD costs to operators. To account for various inflationary costs in the airline industry, we find it necessary to increase the labor rate used in these calculations from \$60 per work hour to \$65 per work hour. The cost impact information, below, reflects this increase in the specified hourly labor rate.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 2 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD. The detailed inspections would take about 2 work hours per airplane, and the NDT inspection would take about 5 work hours per airplane, per inspection cycle. The average labor rate is \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost per airplane is estimated to be \$130 for the detailed inspections and \$325 per NDT inspection.

The FAA has been advised that the proposed one-time detailed inspections have already been accomplished for both of the U.S.-registered airplanes. Therefore, the future economic cost impact of this proposed AD on U.S. operators would be only \$325 per airplane, per each of the repetitive NDT inspections.