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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0070; Product Identifier 2015-NM-146-AD; Amendment 39-19182; AD 2018-03-09]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Model A321-211 and -231 airplanes. This AD requires contacting the FAA to obtain instructions for addressing the unsafe condition on these products, and doing the actions specified in those instructions. This AD was prompted by a determination that the flat-headed pin at the upper attachment point of the overhead stowage compartments at a certain frame may not sustain the maximum weight load for each flight phase. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD becomes effective February 22, 2018.

We must receive comments on this AD by March 26, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.
- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0070; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone: 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW, Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone: 425-227-1405; fax: 425-227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2015-0164, dated August 10, 2015 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or "the MCAI"), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus Model A321-211 and -231 airplanes. The MCAI states:

> The overhead stowage compartments (OHSC), located at Frame 47.2 left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) side of the fuselage in certain aeroplanes, are currently installed with a flat headed pin at the upper attachment point. The pin passes through the OHSC upper attachment hole, then through the upper attachment fitting, and is secured by a split ring through the pin. A design review identified a risk that the OHSC attachment may not sustain the maximal loads for each flight phase, over the aeroplane life.
>
> This condition, if not corrected, could lead to OHSC detachment during flight, possibly resulting in injury to cabin crew or passengers.
>
> To address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus defined a new attachment design to secure the OHSC attachment in all the flight phases over the aeroplane life. Airbus issued Service Bulletin (SB) A320-25-1852 to provide modification instructions.
>
> For the reason described above, this [EASA] AD requires modification of the affected OHSC attachments.

You may examine the MCAI on the internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0070.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of This AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI. We are issuing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined the unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

FAA's Determination of the Effective Date

Since there are currently no domestic operators of this product, we find good cause that notice and opportunity for prior public comment are unnecessary. In addition, for the reason(s) stated above, we find that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

Comments Invited

This AD is a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety, and we did not precede it by notice and opportunity for public comment. We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2018-0070; Product Identifier 2015-NM-146-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this AD based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to http://www.regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this AD.

Costs of Compliance

Currently, there are no affected U.S.-registered airplanes. This AD requires contacting the FAA to obtain instructions for addressing the unsafe condition, and doing the actions specified in those instructions. Based on the actions specified in the MCAI AD, we are providing the following cost estimates for an affected airplane that is placed on the U.S. Register in the future:

Estimated Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
Modification	4 work-hours × $85 per hour = $340	$161	$501

According to the manufacturer, some of the costs of this AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected individuals. We do not control warranty coverage for affected individuals. As a result, we have included all costs in our cost estimate.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. “Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs,” describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in “Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements.” Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

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);

3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and

4. 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.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

2018-03-09 Airbus: Amendment 39-19182; Docket No. FAA-2018-0070; Product Identifier 2015-NM-146-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD becomes effective February 22, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus Model A321-211 and -231 airplanes, certificated in any category, manufacturer serial numbers 3191, 3217, 3241, 3251, 3267, 3334, 3459, 3493, 3507, 3552, 3566, 3587, 3645, 3681, 3764, 3784, 3847, 3867, 3920, 3934, 3938, 3951, 3981, 4058, 4074, 4099, 4103, 4116, 4148, 4184, 4189, 4194, 4217, 4224, 4230, 4266, 4271, 4274, 4292, 4299, 4338, 4341, 4369, 4387, 4416, 4430, 4461, and 4500.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 25, Equipment/furnishings.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a determination that the flat-headed pin at the upper attachment point of the overhead stowage compartments (OHSCs) at a certain frame may not sustain the maximum weight load for each flight phase. We are issuing this AD to prevent OHSC detachment during flight, which could cause injury to the crew or passengers.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Required Action(s)

Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, request instructions from the Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, to address the unsafe condition specified in paragraph (e) of this AD; and accomplish the action(s) at the times specified in, and in accordance with, those instructions. Guidance can be found in Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2015-0164, dated August 10, 2015.

(h) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

The Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Section, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (i)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(i) Related Information

(1) Refer to MCAI EASA AD 2015-0164, dated August 10, 2015, for related information. You may examine the MCAI on the internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0070.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW, Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone: 425-227-1405; fax: 425-227-1149.

(j) Material Incorporated by Reference

None.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 26, 2018.
Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.