

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-289-AD; Amendment 39-10401; AD 98-06-23]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB 2000 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Saab Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes, that requires application of sealant to the auxiliary power unit (APU) firezone bulkhead. This amendment is prompted by issuance of mandatory continued airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent hazardous amounts of flame, fuel, and vapor from entering compartments outside the fire zone due to unsealed openings in the firezone bulkhead, which could result in a fire outside the APU firezone compartment.

DATES: Effective April 23, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of April 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Saab Aircraft AB, SAAB Aircraft Product Support, S-581.88, Linköping, Sweden. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Norman B. Martenson, Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2110; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Saab Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes was published in the **Federal Register** on December 18, 1997 (62 FR 66315). That action proposed to require application

of sealant to the auxiliary power unit (APU) firezone bulkhead.

Comments

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the single comment received.

Request To Revise Description of the Addressed Unsafe Condition

One commenter notes that the description of the addressed unsafe condition that appeared in the proposal states, in part, “* * * to prevent hazardous amounts of flame, fuel, and vapor from entering the passenger compartments * * *.” The commenter states that there are other compartments between the APU firezone compartments and the passenger compartment; the actual design makes it unlikely that flames, fuel, or vapor will enter the passenger compartment due to unsealed openings in the firezone bulkhead. The commenter suggests that a more accurate description of the unsafe condition would be “* * * to prevent hazardous amounts of flame, fuel, and vapor from entering compartments outside the fire zone * * *.”

The FAA concurs that the commenter's proposed wording is a more accurate statement of the unsafe condition. The FAA has revised this final rule accordingly.

Conclusion

After careful review of the available data, including the comment noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule with the change previously described. The FAA has determined that this change will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 3 Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$360, or \$120 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein will not have substantial direct effects 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, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (1) is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a “significant rule” under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) 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 final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

98-06-23 Saab Aircraft AB: Amendment 39-10401. Docket 97-NM-289-AD.

Applicability: Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes, serial numbers -004 through -040 inclusive, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in

accordance with paragraph (b) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent hazardous amounts of flame, fuel, and vapor from entering compartments outside the fire zone due to unsealed openings in the firezone bulkhead, which could result in an uncontrollable fire outside the auxiliary power unit (APU) firezone compartment, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 400 flight hours or 2 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, apply sealant to the APU firezone bulkhead, in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 2000-53-024, dated December 2, 1996.

(b) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(d) The actions shall be done in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 2000-53-024, dated December 2, 1996. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Saab Aircraft AB, SAAB Aircraft Product Support, S-581.88, Linköping, Sweden. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in Swedish airworthiness directive SAD No. 1-105, dated December 4, 1996.

(e) This amendment becomes effective on April 23, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 10, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 98-6761 Filed 3-18-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-77-AD; Amendment 39-10400; AD 98-06-22]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A310 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment supersedes an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to all Airbus Model A310 Series Airplanes, that currently requires measurement of the force required to move the interior control handle of the emergency exit doors, and various follow-on corrective actions, if necessary. This amendment adds repetitive functional tests to measure the force necessary to move the interior control handle of the emergency exit doors; and requires adjusting an emergency exit door or replacing the bearing of the door lifting mechanism, if necessary. This amendment is prompted by reports of seizure of a bearing and increased door handle forces that were outside the limits of the required hand forces due to seizure of two teflon line bearings on the lifting shaft. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent impeding passenger evacuation during an emergency due to difficulty in lifting the interior control handle that is used to open the emergency exit door.

DATES: Effective April 23, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of April 23, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of Airbus All Operators Telex 52 08, Revision 1, dated December 1, 1994, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of May 2, 1995 (60 FR 19155, April 17, 1995).

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Norman B. Martenson, Manager,

International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2110; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) by superseding AD 95-08-07, amendment 39-9196 (60 FR 19155, April 17, 1995), which is applicable to all Airbus Model A310 series airplanes, was published in the **Federal Register** on October 14, 1997 (62 FR 53269). The action proposed to supersede AD 95-08-07 to continue to require measurement of the force required to move the interior control handle of the emergency exit doors, and various follow-on corrective actions, if necessary. The action also proposed to require repetitive functional tests to measure the force necessary to move the interior control handle of the emergency exit doors; and adjusting an emergency exit door or replacing the bearing of the door lifting mechanism, if necessary.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the comments received.

Request for Additional Functional Testing

One commenter requests that testing of the force required to open the door be accomplished at least three times during accomplishment of the functional test. The commenter states that this would aid in identifying cases where the door handle force was very close to the limit.

The FAA does not concur with the commenter's request. The procedures described in the referenced service information indicate that the emergency exit door is to be moved at least three times into the closed position, and lifted each time. Additionally, the service information specifies that the operation of the door should be assessed during the lifting process for an aligned movement; since the movement of the interior control handle is smooth, constant hand force is required. In light of this, the FAA finds that the requirements of this AD, as proposed, are adequate to address the identified unsafe condition.

Request for Pre-Flight Checks

The commenter also requests that a requirement be added to the proposal to check the handle force on a pre-flight basis to ensure that the force would not exceed the limit shortly after the inspection is performed. The