

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION****Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 98-NM-13-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300, A310, and A300-600 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 A300, A310, and A300-600 series airplanes. This proposal would require replacement of the non-return valves located in the engine fuel feed lines on the outer fuel tank with new return valves; and, for certain airplanes, replacement of the inner tank booster pump canisters with modified canisters. This proposal is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent sticking of non-return valves located in the fuel system, which could result in an internal fuel transfer from the center tank to the inner or outer tank. Such a transfer of fuel could lead to fuel spillage overboard through the vent system, and consequent insufficient fuel for the airplane to reach its flight destination.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by April 27, 1998.**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-13-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 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:** 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:****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 notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

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 notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 98-NM-13-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. 98-NM-13-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 A300, A310, and A300-600 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that it has received reports of sticking of the non-return valves located in the engine fuel feed line on the outer wing fuel tank. A report also has been received of a similar failure of the non-return valve located in the inner tank fuel pump canister. The cause of the sticking of the non-return valves has been attributed to excessive free play in the shutter of the valves. This condition, if not corrected, could result in an internal fuel transfer

from the center tank to the inner or outer tank, which could lead to fuel spillage overboard through the vent system, and consequent insufficient fuel to reach the flight destination.

**Explanation of Relevant Service Information**

Airbus has issued the following service bulletins, which describe procedures for replacement of the non-return valves located in the engine fuel feed lines on the outer fuel tank with new non-return valves:

- A300-28-0063, Revision 1, dated January 15, 1997 (for Model A300 series airplanes)
- A310-28-2053, Revision 1, dated January 15, 1997 (for Model A310 series airplanes)
- A300-28-6031, Revision 1, dated January 15, 1997 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes)

For certain airplanes, Airbus also has issued the following service bulletins, which describe procedures for replacement of the inner fuel tank booster pump canisters with modified canisters:

- A300-28-0071, dated January 15, 1997 (for Model A300 series airplanes)
- A310-28-2124, dated January 15, 1997 (for Model A310 series airplanes)
- A300-28-6054, dated January 15, 1997 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes)

Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletins is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The DGAC classified these service bulletins as mandatory and issued French airworthiness directive 97-082-215(B), dated March 12, 1997, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

**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 the service bulletins described previously.

### Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 103 Model A300, A310, and A300-600 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

The FAA estimates that the proposed replacement of the non-return valves would take approximately 66 work hours per airplane to accomplish, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would be supplied by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed action on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$407,880, or \$3,960 per airplane.

The FAA estimates that replacement of the inner fuel tank booster pump canisters would take approximately 12 work hours per airplane to accomplish, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would be supplied by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed action on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$74,160, or \$720 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed 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 proposed herein would 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 proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

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 location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

### List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

### The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 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:

**Airbus Industrie:** Docket 98-NM-13-AD.

**Applicability:** Model A300, A310, and A300-600 series airplanes; on which Airbus Modification 8928 or 6094 has not been installed; certificated in any category.

**Note 1:** This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise 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 sticking of non-return valves located in the fuel system, which could result in fuel spillage overboard and consequent insufficient fuel for the airplane to reach its flight destination, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 18 months after the effective date of this AD, accomplish paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this AD, as applicable.

(1) For airplanes on which Airbus Modification 8928 has not been installed: Replace the non-return valves located in the engine fuel feed lines on the outer fuel tank with new non-return valves, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-28-0063, Revision 1 (for Model A300 series airplanes);

Airbus Service Bulletin A310-28-2053, Revision 1 (for Model A310 series airplanes); or Airbus Service Bulletin A300-28-6031, Revision 1 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes); all dated January 15, 1997; as applicable.

(2) For extended range twin-engine operations (ETOPS) airplanes, or airplanes equipped with auxiliary tanks; on which Airbus Modification 6094 has not been installed: Replace the inner tank booster pump canisters with modified canisters, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300-28-0071 (for Model A300 series airplanes); A310-28-2124 (for Model A310 series airplanes); or A300-28-6054 (for Model A300-600 series airplanes); all dated January 15, 1997; as applicable.

(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.

**Note 3:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 97-082-215(B), dated March 12, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 23, 1998.

**Darrell M. Pederson,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
[FR Doc. 98-8096 Filed 3-26-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-272-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747-100, -200, -300, -SP, and -SR Series Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM); reopening of comment period.

**SUMMARY:** This document announces a reopening of the comment period for the above-referenced NPRM, applicable to