

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

[Docket No. 2000-NM-415-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 Series Airplanes****AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes the superseding of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes, that currently requires modification of the forward and aft evacuation slide systems by replacing the Velcro restraints for the support logs with frangible link restraints. This action would reduce the time to accomplish the modification from 3 years to 9 months. 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 the ingestion of sill support-log material into the aspirator of the evacuation slide, which could result in failure of the slide to inflate.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by May 30, 2001.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2000-NM-415-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. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227-1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: 9-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2000-NM-415-AD" in the subject line and need not be submitted in triplicate. Comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII text.

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:** Tim Dulin, Aerospace Engineer, ANM-116, FAA, International Branch, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2141; 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 action may be changed in light of the comments received.

Submit comments using the following format:

- Organize comments issue-by-issue. For example, discuss a request to change the compliance time and a request to change the service bulletin reference as two separate issues.
- For each issue, state what specific change to the proposed AD is being requested.
- Include justification (e.g., reasons or data) for each request.

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 action must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 2000-NM-415-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. 2000-NM-415-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

**Discussion**

On February 15, 2000, the FAA issued AD 2000-04-06, amendment 39-11588 (65 FR 9212, February 24, 2000), applicable to certain Airbus Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes, to require modification of the forward and aft evacuation slide systems by replacing the Velcro restraints for the support logs with frangible link restraints. That action was prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The requirements of that AD are intended to prevent the ingestion of sill support-log material into the aspirator of the evacuation slide, which could result in failure of the slide to inflate.

**Actions Since Issuance of Previous Rule**

Since the issuance of AD 2000-04-06, there have been additional incidents of the evacuation slide failing to inflate, due to the ingestion of sill support-log material into the aspirator of the slide.

**French Airworthiness Directives**

After receiving additional reports of failure of the evacuation slide to inflate, the Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, issued Revision 1 to French airworthiness directive 2000-359-152(B), dated November 29, 2000, to reduce the compliance time for accomplishment of the modification 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 supersede AD 2000-04-06 to continue

to require modification of the forward and aft evacuation slide systems by replacing the Velcro restraints for the support logs with frangible link restraints. The proposed AD would shorten the compliance time from 3 years after the effective date of AD 2000-04-06 to 9 months after the effective date of the proposed AD. All other requirements of AD 2000-04-06 would remain the same.

#### Cost Impact

There are approximately 202 airplanes of U.S. registry that would be affected by this proposed AD.

The modification that is currently required by AD 2000-04-06 and retained in this proposed AD was previously reported to take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish. That modification, however, is now estimated to take approximately 5 work hours per airplane to accomplish. The average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. There is no charge for required parts. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$60,600, or \$300 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is 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.

#### 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 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 removing amendment 39-11588 (65 FR 9212, February 4, 2000), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), to read as follows:

**Airbus Industrie:** Docket 2000-NM-415-AD. Supersedes AD 2000-04-06, Amendment 39-11588.

**Applicability:** Model A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes; certificated in any category; equipped with any emergency evacuation slide having a part number (P/N) listed as:

D31516-103  
D31516-105  
D31516-107  
D31516-109  
D31517-103  
D31517-105  
D31517-107  
D31517-109

**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 (c) 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 the ingestion of sill support-log material into the aspirator of the escape slide which could result in failure of the escape slide to inflate, accomplish the following:

#### Modification

(a) Within 9 months after the effective date of this AD, modify the forward and aft emergency evacuation slides by replacing the Velcro restraints for the support logs with frangible link restraints, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-25-1215, dated April 29, 1999.

**Note 2:** Airbus Service Bulletin A320-25-1215 refers to Air Cruisers Service Bulletin 004-25-51, dated February 26, 1999, as an additional source of service information for accomplishment of the modification.

#### Spares

(b) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install on any airplane an emergency evacuation slide having P/N D31516-103, D31516-105, D31516-107, D31516-109, D31517-103, D31517-105, D31517-107, or D31517-109.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(c) 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 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

#### Special Flight Permits

(d) 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 4:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 2000-359-152(B) R1, dated November 29, 2000.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 23, 2001.

**Donald L. Riggins,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 01-10595 Filed 4-27-01; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-39-U**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2000-NM-390-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 F4-605R 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 F4-605R