

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

[Docket No. FAA-2023-1815; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00581-T]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus SAS Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by stress analysis results indicating that cracks may appear in the center wing box at frame 42 and slanted junction areas. This proposed AD would require a one-time inspection of the center wing box at frame 42 and slanted junction areas, and applicable corrective actions, if necessary, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference (IBR). The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by October 23, 2023.

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 *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:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA-2023-1815; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- For EASA material that is proposed for IBR in this AD, contact EASA,

Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email *ADs@easa.europa.eu*; website *easa.europa.eu*. You may find this material on the EASA website at *ad.easa.europa.eu*.

- You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tim Dowling, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone 206-231-3667; email: *timothy.p.dowling@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under **ADDRESSES**. Include “Docket No. FAA-2023-1815; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-0581-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to *regulations.gov*, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI

should be sent to Tim Dowling, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone 206-231-3667; email: *timothy.p.dowling@faa.gov*. Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Background

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2023-0074, dated April 5, 2023 (EASA AD 2023-0074) (also referred to as the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus SAS Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. The MCAI states that stress analysis results from A321 XLFR certification and fatigue and damage tolerance harmonization have revealed that cracks may appear in the center wing box at frame 42 and slanted junction areas of the affected airplanes. Cracks may appear due to the high fatigue stress in affected areas.

The FAA is proposing this AD to detect potential cracks in the center wing box at frame 42 and slanted junction areas. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could affect the structural integrity of the fuselage. See EASA AD 2023-0074 for additional background information.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA-2023-1815.

Related Service Information Under 14 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2023-0074 specifies procedures for one-time rototest and high frequency eddy current inspections for cracks of the center wing box rear lower spar junction area at frame 42; a rototest inspection for cracks of the frame 42 slanted beam connection; a detailed visual inspection of certain fasteners for damage; and applicable corrective actions. Corrective actions include obtaining and following instructions for crack repair and replacing damaged fasteners. This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in **ADDRESSES**.

FAA’s Determination

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA’s bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described

in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements in This NPRM

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2023–0074 described previously, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD.

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA’s ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA)

ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, the FAA proposes to incorporate EASA AD 2023–0074 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2023–0074 in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2023–0074 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is

not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in EASA AD 2023–0074. Service information required by EASA AD 2023–0074 for compliance will be available at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA–2023–1815 after the FAA final rule is published.

Interim Action

The FAA considers that this proposed AD would be an interim action. If final action is later identified, the FAA might consider further rulemaking then.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 657 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

ESTIMATED COSTS FOR REQUIRED ACTIONS

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Up to 25 work-hours × \$85 per hour = Up to \$2,125	* \$0	Up to \$2,125	Up to \$1,396,125.

* Additional work will be required if repairs are needed. Inspection results will determine extent (time and materials) of repair costs.

The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

Paperwork Reduction Act

A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2120–0056. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to take approximately 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are mandatory. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Information Collection Clearance Officer, Federal Aviation Administration, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Fort Worth, TX 76177–1524.

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.

The FAA is 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.

Regulatory Findings

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Would 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.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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:

Airbus SAS: Docket No. FAA–2023–1815; Project Identifier MCAI–2023–00581–T.

(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by October 23, 2023.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all Airbus SAS Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by stress analysis results indicating that cracks may appear in the center wing box at frame 42 and slanted junction areas. The FAA is issuing this AD to detect potential cracks in the center wing box at frame 42 and slanted junction areas. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could affect the structural integrity of the fuselage.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Requirements

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2023-0074, dated April 5, 2023 (EASA AD 2023-0074).

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2023-0074

(1) Where EASA AD 2023-0074 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where EASA AD 2023-0074 specifies to comply with “the instructions of the AOT,” this AD requires compliance with the procedures marked as required for compliance (RC) in the Alert Operators Transmission (AOT).

(3) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2023-0074.

(4) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2023-0074 specifies to “contact Airbus for approved repair instructions and, within the compliance time specified therein, accomplish those instructions accordingly,” for this AD, if any cracking is detected, the cracking must be repaired before further flight using a method approved by the Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS’s EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(5) Paragraph (4) of EASA AD 2023-0074 specifies to report inspection results to Airbus within a certain compliance time. For this AD, report inspection results at the applicable time specified in paragraph (h)(5)(i) or (ii) of this AD.

(i) If the inspection was done on or after the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 90 days after the inspection.

(ii) If the inspection was done before the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 90 days after the effective date of this AD.

(6) Where paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2023-0074 refers to a ferry flight, a special flight permit may be issued in accordance with 14

CFR 21.197 and 21.199 provided the operators comply with the provisions specified in paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2023-0074.

(j) Additional AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, International Validation 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 responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer*: For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS’s EASA DOA. If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC)*: Except as required by paragraphs (h)(2) and (j)(2) of this AD, if any service information referenced in EASA AD 2023-0074 contains paragraphs that are labeled as RC, the instructions in RC paragraphs, including subparagraphs under an RC paragraph, must be done to comply with this AD; any paragraphs, including subparagraphs under those paragraphs, that are not identified as RC are recommended. The instructions in paragraphs, including subparagraphs under those paragraphs, not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator’s maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the instructions identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to instructions identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

(k) Additional Information

For more information about this AD, contact Tim Dowling, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; phone 206-231-3667; email: timothy.p.dowling@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2023-0074, dated April 5, 2023.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA AD 2023-0074, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; website easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(5) You may view this material that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, email fr.inspection@nara.gov, or go to: www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.

Issued on August 30, 2023.

Victor Wicklund,

Deputy Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2023-19075 Filed 9-5-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 71**

[Docket No. FAA-2023-1780; Airspace Docket No. 23-ASO-35]

RIN 2120-AA66

Revocation of Class D and Class E Airspace; Milton, FL

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This action proposes to remove Class D airspace, Class E surface airspace, and Class E airspace extending upward from 700 feet above the surface for Choctaw NOLF, Milton, FL.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before October 23, 2023.

ADDRESSES: Send comments identified by FAA Docket No. FAA-2023-1780 and Airspace Docket No. 23-ASO-35 using any of the following methods:

* *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to www.regulations.gov and follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.

* *Mail:* Send comments to Docket Operations, M-30; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W12-140, West Building Ground Floor, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

* *Hand Delivery or Courier:* Take comments to Docket Operations in Room W12-140 of the West Building Ground Floor at 1200 New Jersey