

who has been authorized by the FAA to make those findings.

### Costs of Compliance

This proposed AD would affect about 457 airplanes of U.S. registry and 1,166 airplanes worldwide. The proposed actions would take about 8 work hours per airplane, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the estimated cost of the proposed AD for U.S. operators is \$237,640, or \$520 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

### Regulatory Findings

We have 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 that the 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. 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.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD. See the **ADDRESSES** section for a location to examine the regulatory evaluation.

### List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, 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 (AD):

**Boeing:** Docket No. FAA-2004-19022; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-122-AD.

### Comments Due Date

(a) The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) must receive comments on this AD action by October 22, 2004.

### Affected ADs

(b) None.

### Applicability

(c) This AD applies to Boeing Model 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, and -900 series airplanes, certificated in any category; as listed in Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1251, dated June 3, 2004.

### Unsafe Condition

(d) This AD was prompted by a report of cracks found, during fatigue testing, at several of the fastener rows in the web lap splices at the dome apex of the aft pressure bulkhead. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct fatigue cracks in the webs of the aft pressure bulkhead, which could result in rapid decompression of the airplane.

### Compliance

(e) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

### Initial and Repetitive Inspections

(f) Prior to accumulating 26,000 total flight cycles or within 4,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later: Do a detailed inspection, low frequency eddy current inspection, and high frequency eddy current inspection of the webs of the aft pressure bulkhead at body station 1016 for cracks, in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1251, dated June 3, 2004. Repeat the inspections thereafter at intervals not to exceed 4,000 flight cycles.

**Note 1:** For the purposes of this AD, a detailed inspection is: "An intensive examination of a specific item, installation, or assembly to detect damage, failure, or irregularity. Available lighting is normally supplemented with a direct source of good lighting at an intensity deemed appropriate. Inspection aids such as mirror, magnifying lenses, etc., may be necessary. Surface cleaning and elaborate procedures may be required."

### Corrective Action

(g) If any crack is found during any inspection required by paragraph (f) of this AD: Before further flight, repair per a method approved by the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA; or per data meeting the type certification basis of the airplane approved by a Boeing Company Designated Engineering Representative (DER) who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make such findings. For a repair method to be approved, the approval must specifically reference this AD.

### Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(h)(1) The Manager, Seattle ACO, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested in accordance with the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19.

(2) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD, if it is approved by a Boeing Company DER who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 27, 2004.

**Kalene C. Yanamura,**

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

[FR Doc. 04-20212 Filed 9-3-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2004-19023; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-123-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 Series 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 certain Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. This proposed AD would require removing two maintenance lights in the hydraulics bay, disconnecting the wiring for the lights, and modifying the switches. This proposed AD is prompted by underlying safety issues involved in fuel tank explosions on several large transport airplanes. We are proposing this AD to prevent an ignition source for fuel vapor in the hydraulics bay, which could result in fire or explosion in the adjacent center wing fuel tank.

**DATES:** We must receive comments on this proposed AD by October 7, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Use one of the following addresses to submit comments on this proposed AD.

- *DOT Docket Web site:* Go to <http://dms.dot.gov> and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- *Government-wide rulemaking Web site:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street SW., Nassif Building, room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590.

- *By fax:* (202) 493-2251.
- *Hand delivery:* Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Airbus, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France.

You can examine the contents of this AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>, or at the Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street SW., room PL-401, on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, Washington, DC.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2125; fax (425) 227-1149.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Docket Management System (DMS)

The FAA has implemented new procedures for maintaining AD dockets electronically. As of May 17, 2004, new AD actions are posted on DMS and assigned a docket number. We track each action and assign a corresponding directorate identifier. The DMS AD docket number is in the form "Docket No. FAA-2004-99999." The Transport Airplane Directorate identifier is in the form "Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-999-AD." Each DMS AD docket also lists the directorate identifier ("Old Docket Number") as a cross-reference for searching purposes.

##### Comments Invited

We invite you to submit any written relevant data, views, or arguments regarding this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under **ADDRESSES**. Include "Docket No. FAA-2004-19023; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-123-AD" at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed AD. We will consider all comments submitted by the closing date and may amend the proposed AD in light of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://dms.dot.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed AD. Using the search function of our docket Web site, anyone can find and read the

comments in any of our dockets, including the name of the individual who sent the comment (or signed the comment on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You can review the DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477-78), or you can visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

We are reviewing the writing style we currently use in regulatory documents. We are interested in your comments on whether the style of this document is clear, and your suggestions to improve the clarity of our communications that affect you. You can get more information about plain language at <http://www.faa.gov/language> and <http://www.plainlanguage.gov>.

##### Examining the Docket

You can examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>, or in person at the Docket Management Facility office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Docket Management Facility office (telephone (800) 647-5227) is located on the plaza level of the Nassif Building at the DOT street address stated in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after the DMS receives them.

##### Discussion

We have examined the underlying safety issues involved in recent fuel tank explosions on several large transport airplanes, including the adequacy of existing regulations, the service history of airplanes subject to those regulations, and existing maintenance practices for fuel tank systems. As a result of those findings, we issued a regulation titled "Transport Airplane Fuel Tank System Design Review, Flammability Reduction and Maintenance and Inspection Requirements" (67 FR 23086, May 7, 2001). In addition to new airworthiness standards for transport airplanes and new maintenance requirements, this rule included Special Federal Aviation Regulation No. 88 ("SFAR 88," Amendment 21-78, and subsequent Amendments 21-82 and 21-83).

Among other actions, SFAR 88 requires certain type design (*i.e.*, type certificate (TC) and supplemental type certificate (STC)) holders to substantiate that their fuel tank systems can prevent ignition sources in the fuel tanks. This requirement applies to type design holders for large turbine-powered transport airplanes and for subsequent modifications to those airplanes. It requires them to perform design reviews

and to develop design changes and maintenance procedures if their designs do not meet the new fuel tank safety standards. As explained in the preamble to the rule, we intended to adopt airworthiness directives to mandate any changes found necessary to address unsafe conditions identified as a result of these reviews.

In evaluating these design reviews, we have established four criteria intended to define the unsafe conditions associated with fuel tank systems that require corrective actions. The percentage of operating time during which fuel tanks are exposed to flammable conditions is one of these criteria. The other three criteria address the failure types under evaluation: single failures, single failures in combination with another latent condition(s), and in-service failure experience. For all four criteria, the evaluations included consideration of previous actions taken that may mitigate the need for further action.

The Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) has issued a regulation that is similar to SFAR 88. (The JAA is an associated body of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) representing the civil aviation regulatory authorities of a number of European States who have agreed to co-operate in developing and implementing common safety regulatory standards and procedures.) Under this regulation, the JAA stated that all members of the ECAC that hold type certificates for transport category airplanes are required to conduct a design review against explosion risks.

We have determined that the actions identified in this proposed AD are necessary to reduce the potential of ignition sources inside fuel tanks, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in fuel tank explosions and consequent loss of the airplane.

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified us that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. The DGAC advises that a design review prompted by the JAA regulation showed that certain maintenance lights in the hydraulics bay of these airplanes should be removed. If these lights are not removed, they could be an ignition source for fuel vapor in the hydraulics bay, and cause fire or explosion in the adjacent center wing fuel tank.

##### Relevant Service Information

Airbus has issued Service Bulletin A320-92-1032, dated March 8, 2004. The service bulletin describes

procedures for removing two maintenance lights in the hydraulics bay, disconnecting the wiring for the lights, and modifying the switches. Accomplishing the actions specified in the service information is intended to adequately address the unsafe condition. The DGAC mandated the service information and issued French airworthiness directive F-2004-073, dated May 26, 2004, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

#### FAA's Determination and Requirements of the Proposed AD

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. We have examined the DGAC's findings, evaluated all pertinent information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Therefore, we are proposing this AD, which would require removing two maintenance lights in the hydraulics bay, disconnecting the wiring for the lights, and modifying the switches. The proposed AD would require you to use the service information described previously to perform these actions, except as discussed under "Difference Between the Proposed AD and the French Airworthiness Directive."

#### Difference Between the Proposed AD and the French Airworthiness Directive

The applicability of French airworthiness directive F-2004-073

excludes airplanes that accomplished Airbus Service Bulletin A320-92-1032 in service. However, we have not excluded those airplanes in the applicability of this proposed AD; rather, this proposed AD includes a requirement to accomplish the actions specified in that service bulletin. This requirement would ensure that the actions specified in the service bulletin and required by this proposed AD are accomplished on all affected airplanes. Operators must continue to operate the airplane in the configuration required by this proposed AD unless an alternative method of compliance is approved.

#### Costs of Compliance

The following table provides the estimated costs for U.S. operators to comply with this proposed AD.

#### ESTIMATED COSTS

Action	Work hours	Average labor rate per hour	Parts	Cost per airplane	Number of U.S.-registered airplanes	Fleet cost
Remove lights, disconnect wires and modify switches ...	3	\$65	\$70	\$265	648	\$171,720

#### Regulatory Findings

We have 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 that the 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. 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.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD. See the **ADDRESSES** section for a location to examine the regulatory evaluation.

#### List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, 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 (AD):

**Airbus:** Docket No. FAA-2004-19023; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-123-AD.

#### Comments Due Date

(a) The Federal Aviation Administration must receive comments on this AD action by October 7, 2004.

#### Affected ADs

(b) None.

#### Applicability

(c) This AD applies to Airbus Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes; certificated in any category; except those airplanes on which Airbus Modification 33518 has been accomplished in production.

#### Unsafe Condition

(d) This AD was prompted by underlying safety issues involved in fuel tank explosions on several large transport airplanes. We are issuing this AD to prevent an ignition source for fuel vapor in the hydraulics bay, which could result in fire or explosion in the center wing fuel tank.

#### Compliance

(e) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

#### Modification

(f) Within 19 months after the effective date of this AD, remove maintenance lights 9LL and 10LL from the hydraulics bay, and disconnect the wiring for the lights, and modify the 12LL switches. Do the actions in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-92-1032, dated March 8, 2004.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(g) The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested in accordance with the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19.

#### Related Information

(h) French airworthiness directive F-2004-073, dated May 26, 2004, also addresses the subject of this AD.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 27, 2004.

Ali Bahrami,

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 04-20213 Filed 9-3-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2004-19003; Directorate Identifier 2003-NM-245-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 Series 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 Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. This proposed AD would require repetitive inspections for cracks in the fuselage skin, doubler, bearstrap, and frames surrounding the main, forward, and aft cargo doors; and repair of any cracking. This proposed AD also would require inspections of certain existing repairs for cracking, and related corrective action if cracking is found. This proposed AD is prompted by reports of multiple fatigue cracks in the fuselage skin and bonded skin doubler, bearstrap, and doorway frames surrounding the forward and aft cargo doors. We are proposing this AD to find and fix fatigue cracking in the fuselage skin, doubler, bearstrap, and frames, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the frames, possible loss of a cargo door, and consequent rapid decompression of the fuselage.

**DATES:** We must receive comments on this proposed AD by October 22, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Use one of the following addresses to submit comments on this proposed AD.

- DOT Docket Web site: Go to <http://dms.dot.gov> and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- Government-wide rulemaking Web site: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- Mail: Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street SW., Nassif Building, room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590.

- By fax: (202) 493-2251.
- Hand Delivery: Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207.

You can examine the contents of this AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>, or in person at the Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street SW., room PL-401, on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, Washington, DC.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

*Technical information:* Howard Hall, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 917-6430; fax (425) 917-6590.

*Plain language information:* Marcia Walters, [marcia.walters@faa.gov](mailto:marcia.walters@faa.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Docket Management System (DMS)

The FAA has implemented new procedures for maintaining AD dockets electronically. As of May 17, 2004, new AD actions are posted on DMS and assigned a docket number. We track each action and assign a corresponding directorate identifier. The DMS AD docket number is in the form "Docket No. FAA-2004-99999." The Transport Airplane Directorate identifier is in the form "Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-999-AD." Each DMS AD docket also lists the directorate identifier ("Old Docket Number") as a cross-reference for searching purposes.

##### Comments Invited

We invite you to submit any relevant written data, views, or arguments regarding this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under **ADDRESSES**. Include "Docket No. FAA-2004-19003; Directorate Identifier 2003-NM-245-AD" in the subject line of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed AD. We will consider all comments submitted by the closing date and may amend the proposed AD in light of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://dms.dot.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact with FAA

personnel concerning this proposed AD. Using the search function of that website, anyone can find and read the comments in any of our dockets, including the name of the individual who sent the comment (or signed the comment on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You can review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477-78), or you can visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

We are reviewing the writing style we currently use in regulatory documents. We are interested in your comments on whether the style of this document is clear, and your suggestions to improve the clarity of our communications that affect you. You can get more information about plain language at <http://www.faa.gov/language> and <http://www.plainlanguage.gov>.

##### Examining the Docket

You can examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>, or in person at the Docket Management Facility office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Docket Management Facility office (telephone (800) 647-5227) is located on the plaza level of the Nassif Building at the DOT street address stated in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after the DMS receives them.

##### Background

The FAA previously issued related rulemaking applicable to certain Boeing Model 737 series airplanes, as follows:

AD 88-11-12, amendment 39-5890 (53 FR 18077, May 20, 1988). That AD requires structural inspection of the forward lower cargo doorway frames, and repair if necessary. That AD also requires replacement of certain repaired parts previously installed.

AD 93-14-10, amendment 39-8634 (58 FR 43547, August 17, 1993). That AD requires structural inspections to detect cracks of the forward and aft body frames adjacent to the aft lower cargo door and repair of cracked parts, and provides an optional modification. That AD also requires certain repetitive inspections to continue after installation of the optional modification.

##### FAA's Determination Since Issuance of AD 88-11-12 and AD 93-14-10

Since we issued those ADs, we have received reports of multiple fatigue cracks in the fuselage skin and bonded skin doubler, bearstrap, and doorway frames surrounding the forward and aft cargo doors on certain Boeing Model