owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (d) 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 rupture of the universal joints, which could result in inadvertent movement of the slats, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 15,000 total landings, or within 400 flight hours after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform a visual inspection and an electrical continuity test to detect missing or damaged vespel bushes on the slat system universal joint assemblies of the left- and right-hand wings, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A310–27–2061, dated November 4, 1992, or Revision 01, dated October 3, 1997. Repeat this inspection and test thereafter at intervals not to exceed 15,000 landings.

(b) If any vespel bushes are missing or damaged, prior to further flight, replace the universal joint with a new joint in accordance with Airbus Industrie Service Bulletin A310–27–2061, dated November 4, 1992, or Revision 01, dated October 3, 1997. After replacement, continue to repeat the inspection and test required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 15,000 landings.

(c) Modification of the slat system universal joint and shaft assemblies in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A310–27–2060, Revision 01, dated October 3, 1997, constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection and test requirements of this AD.

(d) 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.

(e) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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 92–275–139(B)R1, dated December 17, 1997.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on October 6, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–27458 Filed 10–13–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–153–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300–600 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: This document revises an earlier proposed airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A300–600 series airplanes, that would have required repetitive inspections to detect cracks in the angle fitting at frame 40 of the center wing box, and corrective actions, if necessary; and eventual modification of that angle fitting, which would terminate the repetitive inspections. That proposal was prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. This new action revises certain compliance times in the proposed rule. The actions specified by this new proposed AD are intended to prevent cracks in the center wing box angle fitting, which could result in the failure of the center wing box at frame 40, and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by November 9, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–153–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 97–NM–153–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. 97–NM–153–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to add an airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A300–600 series airplanes, was published as a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) in the **Federal Register** on March 4, 1998 (63 FR 10576). That NPRM would have required repetitive inspections to detect cracks in the angle fitting at frame 40 of the center wing box, and corrective

actions, if necessary; and eventual modification of that angle fitting, which would terminate the repetitive inspections. That NPRM was prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by that NPRM are intended to prevent cracks in the center wing box angle fitting, which could result in the failure of the center wing box at frame 40, and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Actions Since Issuance of Previous Proposal

Since the issuance of that NPRM, the FAA has become aware of a typographical error that appeared in Table 1 of the proposal. The initial inspection threshold for airplanes having an average flight time (AFT) of 5.50–5.99 should be 3,200 flight cycles instead of 2,300 flight cycles. Table 1 of this supplemental NPRM has been revised accordingly.

Comment Received

Due consideration has been given to the comment received in response to the NPRM.

Request for Correction to Compliance Time

One commenter requests a correction to another compliance time that appeared in Table 1 of the proposed AD. The initial inspection interval for airplanes having an AFT of 2.10–2.49, should be 5,300 flight cycles instead of 6,300 flight cycles. The commenter notes that the data listed in Table 1 of the proposal did not match the data the manufacturer submitted to the FAA on October 17, 1997.

The FAA concurs with the commenter's request to correct the compliance time listed in the original NPRM. Table 1 of this supplemental NPRM has been revised accordingly.

Conclusion

Since this change expands the scope of the originally proposed rule, the FAA has determined that it is necessary to reopen the comment period to provide additional opportunity for public comment.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 54 Model A300–600 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

It would take approximately 36 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $116,640, or $2,160 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

It would take approximately 754 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed modification, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately $11,605 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the modification proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $3,069,630, or $56,845 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: Docket 97–NM–153–AD.

Applicability: Model A300–600 series airplanes on which Airbus Modification 10453 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 (e) 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 cracks in the center wing box angle fitting, which could result in the failure of the center wing box at frame 40, and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of the threshold specified in Table 1 of this AD, as applicable, or within 1,500 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later: Perform a detailed visual, eddy current, or liquid penetrant inspection to detect cracking in the angle fitting of frame 40 (both left and right), with the nut removed, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–57–6052, Revision 1, dated July 22, 1996. Thereafter, repeat the inspections at the interval specified in Table 1 of this AD, as applicable, until the actions required by paragraph (c) of this AD have been accomplished.

TABLE 1

Average flight time (AFT): flight hours/flight cycles	Threshold (flight cycles)	Visual inspection interval (flight cycles)	Eddy current/liquid penetrant inspection interval (flight cycles)
2.10–2.49	5,900	4,700	5,300
2.50–2.99	5,600	4,400	4,900
3.00–3.49	5,200	4,100	4,600
3.50–3.99	4,800	3,800	4,200
4.00–4.49	4,400	3,500	3,900
4.50–4.99	4,000	3,200	3,500
5.00–5.49	3,600	2,800	3,200
5.50–5.99	3,200	2,500	2,800
6.00–6.50	2,800	2,200	2,500

(b) Except as provided by paragraph (d) of this AD, if any crack is found during an inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, prior to further flight, accomplish follow-on corrective actions in accordance with the procedures specified in Airbus Service Bulletin A300–57–6052, Revision 1, dated July 22, 1996.

(c) Within 4 years after the effective date of this AD, modify the angle fitting at frame 40 (both left and right) in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A300–57–6053, Revision 1, dated October 31, 1995. Accomplishment of the modification constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD.

(d) If any crack is found during an inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, and the applicable service bulletin specifies to contact the manufacturer for an appropriate action: Prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

(e) 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. 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.

(f) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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 (CN) 95–111–181(B) R1, dated October 23, 1996.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on October 7, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–27477 Filed 10–13–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–NM–243–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 777–200 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 Boeing Model 777–200 series airplanes. This proposal would require inspections to verify correct installation of certain fasteners located on the trailing edges of the horizontal and vertical stabilizer; replacement of the existing fasteners with new fasteners installed with wet sealant; and follow-on actions, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by reports indicating that, during manufacture of the horizontal and vertical stabilizers, certain fasteners attaching the aluminum ribs and brackets to the trailing edges on the empennage were not correctly installed with wet sealant. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent corrosion and possible cracking of those aluminum parts, which could result in loss of the attachment of the elevator and rudder to the empennage and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by November 30, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–NM–243–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 Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124–2207. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stan Wood, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–2772; fax (425) 227–1181.

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