Airworthiness Directive

AD No.: 2018-0220

Issued: 12 October 2018

Note: This Airworthiness Directive (AD) is issued by EASA, acting in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 on behalf of the European Union, its Member States and of the European third countries that participate in the activities of EASA under Article 129 of that Regulation.

This AD is issued in accordance with Regulation (EU) 748/2012, Part 21.A.3B. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 1321/2014 Annex I, Part M.A.301, the continuing airworthiness of an aircraft shall be ensured by accomplishing any applicable ADs. Consequently, no person may operate an aircraft to which an AD applies, except in accordance with the requirements of that AD, unless otherwise specified by the Agency [Regulation (EU) 1321/2014 Annex I, Part M.A.303] or agreed with the Authority of the State of Registry [Regulation (EU) 2018/1139, Article 71 exemption].

Design Approval Holder's Name:	Type/Model designation(s):
AIRBUS	A350 aeroplanes

Effective Date:	19 October 2018
TCDS Number(s):	EASA.A. 151
Foreign AD:	Not applicable
Supersedure:	None

ATA 57 – Wings – Wing Rib Foot to Wing Lower Cover Clearance – Inspection / Temporary Operational Restrictions

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Manufacturer(s):
Airbus

Applicability:
Airbus A350-941 and A350-1041, manufacturer serial numbers as identified in the AOT.

Definitions:
For the purpose of this AD, the following definitions apply:

The AOT: Airbus Alert Operators Transmission (AOT) A57P011-18 dated 8 October 2018.

The FOT: Flight Operators Transmission (FOT) FOT 999.0079/18 dated 4 October 2018.

The MER: Airbus A350 Master Minimum Equipment List (MMEL), Major Event Revision (MER), dated 4 October 2018.

Affected areas: Rib foot locations identified in Appendix 2 and 3 of the AOT, as applicable to aeroplane model.

Reason:

A deviation was identified on certain A350 aeroplanes, where a gap check between some wing rib feet and the wing lower cover (WLC) was not systematically performed. Due to tolerance build-up during wing manufacture, close gap between the WLC and wing rib feet could occur in some locations. Under some flight loading conditions, intermittent or permanent contact may occur.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, combined with an empty fuel tank or fuel level below the rib foot area, could create an ignition source for the fuel vapour inside the tanks which, in case of a lightning strike of high intensity in the immediate area, could possibly result in ignition of the fuel-air mixture in the affected fuel tank and consequent loss of the aeroplane.

To address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus issued the AOT to provide inspection instructions, and an MER of the A350 MMEL that incorporates temporary restrictions of the MMEL items related to the fuel tank inerting system.

For the reasons described above, this AD requires implementation of certain dispatch restrictions. This AD also requires a one-time detailed inspection (DET) of the affected areas and, depending on findings, accomplishment of applicable corrective action(s). No findings, or accomplishment of corrective action(s), as applicable, allows removal of the MMEL restrictions.

This AD is considered to be an interim action and further AD action may follow.

Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s):

Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously:

MMEL Changes / Dispatch Restrictions:

(1) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, implement the MMEL changes, as specified in the FOT, in accordance with the instructions of the MER, inform all flight crews, and, thereafter, operate the aeroplane accordingly.

Inspection:

(2) Within 3 months after the effective date of this AD, accomplish a DET of the affected areas in accordance with the instructions of the AOT.

Corrective Action(s):

(3) If, during the DET as required by paragraph (2) of this AD, any discrepancy is detected, before next flight, accomplish the applicable corrective action(s) in accordance with the instructions of the AOT.

(4) If, during the DET as required by paragraph (2) of this AD, any structural damage is detected, before next flight, contact Airbus for approved repair instructions and accomplish those instructions accordingly.

MMEL Change:

(5) After inspection of an aeroplane, and, depending on findings, accomplishment of corrective action(s) on that aeroplane, as required by paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively, the MMEL

restrictions implemented on that aeroplane as required by paragraph (1) of this AD are no longer necessary and can be removed from that aeroplane.

Ref. Publications:

Airbus A350 MMEL MER dated 04 October 2018.

Airbus AOT A57P011-18 original issue dated 08 October 2018.

Airbus FOT 999.0079/18 original issue dated 04 October 2018.

The use of later approved revisions of the above-mentioned documents is acceptable for compliance with the requirements of this AD.

Remarks:

1. If requested and appropriately substantiated, EASA can approve Alternative Methods of Compliance for this AD.

2. Based on the required actions and the compliance time, EASA have decided to issue a Final AD with Request for Comments, postponing the public consultation process until after publication.

3. Enquiries regarding this AD should be referred to the EASA Safety Information Section, Certification Directorate. E-mail: ADs@easa.europa.eu.

4. Information about any failures, malfunctions, defects or other occurrences, which may be similar to the unsafe condition addressed by this AD, and which may occur, or have occurred on a product, part or appliance not affected by this AD, can be reported to the EU aviation safety reporting system.

5. For any question concerning the technical content of the requirements in this AD, please contact: continued-airworthiness.a350@airbus.com.