Airworthiness Directive

AD No.: 2019-0114

Issued: 24 May 2019

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:

AIRBUS

Type/Model designation(s):

A340 aeroplanes

Effective Date: 07 June 2019

TCDS Number(s): EASA.A.015

Foreign AD: Not applicable

Supersedure: None

ATA 57 – Wings – Lower Skin Covers at Rib Bay 3/4 – Inspection

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Manufacturer(s):

Airbus, formerly Airbus Industrie

Applicability:

Airbus A340-541, A340-542, A340-642 and A340-643 aeroplanes, all serial numbers with weight variants and configurations as specified in the AOT.

Definitions:

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

The AOT: Airbus All Operators Telex (AOT) A57L014-19.

Airbus date of manufacture: The date of transfer of title (ownership) of the aeroplane upon delivery by Airbus to the first operator.

Reason:

Cracks have been reported on A340-600 aeroplanes on the wing lower cover in rib bay 3-4 at stringers (STR) 20A and STR21A. Left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) sides are affected. In some cases, the cracks resulted in fuel leaks. All affected aeroplanes are in post-mod 48487 configuration.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could reduce the residual strength of the structure of the wing.

To address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus issued the AOT to provide inspection instructions. The technical investigation is ongoing to determine whether repetitive inspections are necessary.

For the reasons described above, this AD requires a one-time detailed visual inspection (DVI) and high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection of the lower wing skin panels around fastener heads located on STR20A and STR21A, between Rib 3 and Rib 4 on LH and RH wing.

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

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

Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously:

Inspection:

(1) Within the compliance times specified in Table 1 of this AD, accomplish a DVI of the external surface of the lower covers at all fastener hole locations at STR20A and STR21A, LH and RH sides, and an HFEC inspection at the external surface of the lower covers of selected fastener hole locations (see Figure 6 of the AOT) at STR20A and STR21A LH and RH sides, in accordance with the instructions of the AOT.

Table 1

Compliance Time (whichever occurs later, **A** or **B**)	
A	Before exceeding 3 200 flight cycles or 19 600 flight hours, whichever occurs first since Airbus date of manufacture
B	Within 12 months after the effective date of this AD

Corrective Action:

(2) If, during any inspection as required by paragraph (1) of this AD, any crack is detected, before next flight, contact Airbus for approved instructions and accomplish those instructions accordingly, in accordance with the instructions of the AOT.

Reporting:

(3) Within 30 days after the inspections as required by paragraph (1) of this AD, report to Airbus the inspection results where the results are no findings.

Ref. Publications:

Airbus AOT A57L014-19 original issue dated 07 May 2019.

The use of later approved revisions of the above-mentioned document 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. This AD was posted on 08 May 2019 as PAD 19-080 for consultation until 22 May 2019. The Comment Response Document can be found in the EASA Safety Publications Tool, in the compressed (zipped) file attached to the record for this AD.

3. Enquiries regarding this AD should be referred to the EASA Programming and Continued Airworthiness 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: AIRBUS – EIAL (Airworthiness Office), E-mail: airworthiness.A330-A340@airbus.com.