Airworthiness Directive

AD No.: 2020-0220

Issued: 13 October 2020

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):
A350 Aeroplanes

Effective Date: 27 October 2020

TCDS Number(s): EASA.A.151

Foreign AD: Not applicable

Supersedure: None

ATA 57 – Wings – Upper / Lower Wing Skin Cover Edge Glow Sealant – Inspection

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Manufacturer(s):
Airbus

Applicability:
Airbus A350-941 and A350-1041 aeroplanes, manufacturer serial numbers as listed in the inspection SB.

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

Affected areas: Stringer edges on left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) wings.

The inspection SB: Airbus Service Bulletin (SB) A350-57-P067.

Airbus date of manufacture: The date of transfer of title (ownership) of the aeroplane upon delivery by Airbus to the first operator, which is referenced in Airbus documentation.

Reason:

Occurrences have been reported on the A350 production line of missing or incorrect application of the lightning strike edge glow sealant protection at specific locations in the wing tanks. This sealant provides the second layer of protection to prevent stringer edge glow in case of lightning strike.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, combined with a pre-existing undetected incorrect installation of an adjacent fastener, 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 inspection SB to provide inspection instructions.

For the reasons described above, this AD requires a one-time detailed inspection (DET) of the affected areas and, depending on findings, accomplishment of applicable corrective action(s).

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

Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously:

Inspection(s):

(1) At the next scheduled maintenance tank entry, or before exceeding 6 years since Airbus date of manufacture, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD, accomplish a DET of each affected area in accordance with the instructions of the inspection SB.

Corrective Action(s):

(2) If, during the inspection as required by paragraph (1) of this AD, discrepancies are detected, as defined in the inspection SB, before next flight, accomplish the applicable corrective action(s) in accordance with the instructions of the inspection SB.

Ref. Publications:

Airbus SB A350-57-P067 original issue dated 17 September 2020.

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 18 September 2020 as PAD 20-143 for consultation until 02 October 2020. No comments were received during the consultation period.

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. This may include reporting on the same or similar components, other than those covered by the design to which this AD applies, if the same unsafe condition can exist or may develop on an aircraft with those components installed. Such components may be installed under an FAA Parts Manufacturer Approval (PMA), Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) or other modification.

5. For any question concerning the technical content of the requirements in this AD, please contact: AIRBUS A350 XWB, E-mail: continued-airworthiness.a350@airbus.com.