European Union Aviation Safety Agency

Airworthiness Directive

AD No.: 2023-0179

Issued: 11 October 2023

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, or Annex Vb Part ML.A.301, as applicable, 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 Annex Vb Part ML.A.303, as applicable] or agreed with the Authority of the State of Registry [Regulation (EU) 2018/1139, Article 71 exemption].

Design Approval Holder's Name:
AIRBUS S.A.S.

Type/Model designation(s):
A320 and A321 aeroplanes

Effective Date:	25 October 2023
TCDS Number(s):	EASA.A.064
Foreign AD:	Not applicable
Supersedure:	This AD supersedes EASA AD 2023-0153 dated 26 July 2023.

ATA 53 – Fuselage – Cargo Door Frame Attachment Drillings – Inspection

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Manufacturer(s):
Airbus, formerly Airbus Industrie

Applicability:
Airbus A320-214, A320-216, A320-251N, A320-271N and A321-253NX aeroplanes, manufacturer serial numbers 8781, 8998, 9015, 9036, 9049, 9068, 9077, 9130, 9175, 9197, 9200, 9211, 9216, 9246, 9252, 9253, 9254, 9264, 9273, 9287, 9300, 9306, 9313, 9316, 9317, 9328, 9329, 9331, 9332, 9341, 9343, 9354, 9358, 9363, 9373, 9378, 9384, 9391, 9394, 9428, 9431, 9439, 9446, 9453, 9454, 9457, 9465, 9473, 9482, 9526, 9559, 9574, 9590, 9595, 10019 and 10044.

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

The SB: Airbus Service Bulletin (SB) A320-53-1493 or SB A320-53-1494, as applicable.

Note 1: For aeroplanes delivered with concession suffix -R, the inspection related to the concession are cancelled and superseded by the inspections in accordance with the instructions of Airbus SB A320-53-1493.

Affected area: Zones as identified in the SB.

Reason:

Following a quality review on the final assembly line of the cargo door frame-to-fuselage skin panel assembly, several drillings were identified as deviating from manufacturing requirements, creating oversized holes.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to reduced structural integrity of the fuselage.

To address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus issued the SB, providing inspection instructions. Consequently, EASA issued AD 2023-0153 to require repetitive inspections of the affected area and, depending on findings, accomplishment of applicable corrective action(s).

Since that AD was issued, it has been determined that, depending on inspection findings, no repetitive inspection may be required.

For the reason described above, this AD retains the requirements of EASA AD 2023-0153, which is superseded, and provides additional corrective action(s) and terminating action(s) instructions.

During the consultation time of PAD 23-100, it was determined that the PAD incorrectly referred to a special detailed inspection (SDI) instead of a geometrical check. Paragraph (1) of this AD was updated accordingly.

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

Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously:

Inspection(s):

(1) Before exceeding 41 800 flight hours (FH) or 20 900 flight cycles (FC), whichever occurs first since first flight of the aeroplane, accomplish the geometrical check of the fastener holes diameter of the affected area in accordance with the instructions of the SB.

Corrective Action(s):

(2) If, during the inspection as required by paragraph (1) of this AD, no deviation is detected, before next flight, deburr the fastener holes and install new fasteners in accordance with the instructions of the SB.

(3) If, during the inspection as required by paragraph (1) of this AD, any deviation is detected, as defined in the SB, before next flight and, thereafter, at intervals not exceeding 88 200 FH or 44 100 FC, whichever occurs first, accomplish a SDI in accordance with the instructions of the SB.

(4) If, during any SDI as required by paragraph (3) of this AD, any crack is detected, before next flight, contact Airbus for approved repair instructions and, within the compliance time identified therein, accomplish those instructions accordingly.

(5) If, during any SDI as required by paragraph (3) of this AD, no crack is detected, before next flight, check the diameter of each fastener hole in accordance with the instructions of the SB.

(6) If, during any check as required by paragraph (5) of this AD, the diameter of any fastener hole is less or equal to the nominal diameter plus 0.2 mm, oversize that fastener hole and install a new oversize fastener and new rivet in accordance with the instructions of the SB.

(7) If, during any check as required by paragraph (5) of this AD, the diameter of any fastener hole is greater than the nominal diameter plus 0.2 mm, before next flight, contact Airbus for approved repair instructions and, within the compliance time identified therein, accomplish those instructions accordingly.

Credit:

(8) For aeroplanes that, before the effective date of this AD, have been repaired in accordance with approved Airbus repair instructions, no action is required by this AD, unless specified otherwise in the approved instructions provided by Airbus.

Terminating Action(s):

(9) Repair of an aeroplane as required by paragraph (4) or (7) of this AD, as applicable, does not constitute terminating action for the repetitive inspections as required by paragraph (3) of this AD for that aeroplane, unless specified otherwise in the approved Airbus repair instructions. The Airbus instructions may contain post-repair inspection instructions, which are required to be accomplished as specified therein.

Ref. Publications:

Airbus SB A320-53-1493 original issue dated 21 March 2023.

Airbus SB A320-53-1494 original issue dated 21 March 2023.

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. This AD was posted on 11 September 2023 as PAD 23-100 for consultation until 09 October 2023. No comments were received during the consultation process.

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. 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 – Airworthiness Office – 1IASA; E-mail: account.airworth-eas@airbus.com.