

[Federal Register: November 27, 2009 (Volume 74, Number 227)]
[Rules and Regulations]
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[DOCID:fr27no09-6]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2009-0571; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-004-AD; Amendment 39-16096; AD 2009-24-08]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 777-200, -200LR, -300, and -300ER Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Boeing Model 777-200, -200LR, -300, and -300ER series airplanes. This AD requires inspections for scribe lines in the skin along lap joints, butt joints, certain external doublers, and the large cargo door hinges; and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. This AD results from reports of scribe lines found at lap joints and butt joints, around external doublers, and at locations where external decals had been removed. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct scribe lines, which can develop into fatigue cracks in the skin. Undetected fatigue cracks can grow and cause sudden decompression of the airplane.

DATES: This AD is effective January 4, 2010.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD as of January 4, 2010.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P.O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; e-mail me.boecom@boeing.com; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The address for the Docket Office (telephone 800-647-5527) is the Document

Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 917-6577; fax (425) 917-6590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to all Boeing Model 777 series airplanes. That NPRM was published in the Federal Register on June 25, 2009 (74 FR 30245). That NPRM proposed to require inspections for scribe lines in the skin along lap joints, butt joints, certain external doublers, and the large cargo door hinges; and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We considered the comment received from the one commenter.

Request To Eliminate Reporting Requirement for Negative Findings

Boeing requests that we revise paragraph (k) of the NPRM to eliminate the requirement to report negative findings. Boeing states that this requirement deviates from Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008, in that the service bulletin specified that operators report findings of cracking. Boeing states that since the Model 777 fleet is young relative to the inspection thresholds, this reporting requirement may last for decades and it would involve hundreds of airplanes. Boeing states that after a period of time, the requirement would become redundant and is therefore an unnecessary burden.

We agree with the commenter for the reasons provided. We revised paragraph (k) of the final rule to eliminate the requirement to report negative findings.

Explanation of Change To Applicability

We have revised the applicability of this AD to identify model designations as published in the type certificate data sheet for the affected models listed in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD with the changes described previously. We also determined that these changes will not increase the economic burden on any operator or increase the scope of the AD.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 129 airplanes of U.S. registry. The following table provides the estimated costs for U.S. operators to comply with this AD. A work-hour estimate is not available for the inspection for an external repair doubler since the inspection required can be different depending

on the in-service repair history of the airplane. This inspection affects up to 129 U.S.-registered airplanes.

Table–Estimated Costs

Action	Work hours	Average labor rate per hour	Parts	Cost per product	Number of U.S.-registered airplanes	Fleet cost
Exploratory Inspection	9 to 34	\$80	None	\$720 to \$2,720	129	\$92,880 to \$350,880

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. “Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in “Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Is not a “significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979), and
- (3) 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.

You can find our regulatory evaluation and the estimated costs of compliance in the AD Docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new AD:



2009-24-08 Boeing: Amendment 39-16096. Docket No. FAA-2009-0571; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-004-AD.

Effective Date

(a) This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective January 4, 2010.

Affected ADs

(b) None.

Applicability

(c) This AD applies to Boeing Model 777-200, -200LR, -300, and -300ER series airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008.

Subject

(d) Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53: Fuselage.

Unsafe Condition

(e) This AD results from reports of scribe lines found at lap joints and butt joints, around external doublers, and at locations where external decals had been cut. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct scribe lines, which can develop into fatigue cracks in the skin. Undetected fatigue cracks can grow and cause sudden decompression of the airplane.

Compliance

(f) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

Inspection

(g) At the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., "Compliance," of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008, except as provided in paragraphs (h) and (j) of this AD, do detailed exploratory inspections for scribe lines in the skin along lap joints, butt joints, certain external doublers, and the large cargo door hinges. Do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions at the times specified in the service bulletin, by accomplishing all actions specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin, except as provided by paragraph (i) of this AD.

Note 1: The inspection exemptions described in NOTES 1.-5. in paragraph 1.E. of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008, apply to this AD.

Exceptions to Service Bulletin Specifications

(h) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008, specifies a compliance time after the date on the service bulletin, this AD requires compliance within the specified compliance time after the effective date of this AD.

(i) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008, specifies to contact Boeing for appropriate action, accomplish applicable actions using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (l) of this AD.

(j) Where paragraph 1.E. of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008, specifies to "contact Boeing for inspection requirements for operation beyond 60,000 total flight-cycles after first repaint," for those airplanes, this AD requires contacting the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), for all inspection requirements of this AD and doing the requirements.

Report

(k) At the applicable time specified in paragraph (k)(1) or (k)(2) of this AD: Submit a report of positive findings of cracks found during the inspection required by paragraph (g) of this AD to the Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. Alternatively, operators may submit reports to their Boeing field service representatives. The report must contain, at a minimum, the inspection results, a description of any discrepancies found, the airplane serial number, and the number of flight cycles and flight hours on the airplane. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements contained in this AD and has assigned OMB Control Number 2120-0056.

(1) If the inspection was done on or after the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the inspection.

(2) If the inspection was done before the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the effective date of this AD.

Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1)(1) The Manager, Seattle ACO, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. Send information to ATTN: Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 917-6577; fax (425) 917-6590. Or, e-mail information to 9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) To request a different method of compliance or a different compliance time for this AD, follow the procedures in 14 CFR 39.19. Before using any approved AMOC on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify your principal maintenance inspector (PMI) or principal avionics inspector (PAI), as appropriate, or lacking a principal inspector, your local Flight Standards District Office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(3) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD, if it is approved by an Authorized Representative for the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Delegation Option Authorization Organization who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

Material Incorporated by Reference

(m) You must use Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0054, dated August 7, 2008, to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of this service information under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P. O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; e-mail me.boecom@boeing.com; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(3) You may review copies of the service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221 or 425-227-1152.

(4) You may also review copies of the service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on November 12, 2009.

Stephen P. Boyd,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. E9-28169 Filed 11-25-09; 8:45 am]