

[Federal Register: February 9, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 26)]
[Rules and Regulations]
[Page 5911-5913]
From the Federal Register Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov]
[DOCID:fr09fe04-4]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002-NM-320-AD; Amendment 39-13449; AD 2004-03-05]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 777-200 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Model 777-200 series airplanes. This action requires a surface high frequency eddy current inspection of the web of the aft pressure bulkhead, repetitive inspections, and corrective action, if necessary. This action is necessary to detect and correct cracks or damage to the web of the aft pressure bulkhead, which could enlarge if undetected, leading to rapid decompression of the airplane and consequent possible loss of flight critical systems. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Effective February 24, 2004.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of February 24, 2004.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before April 9, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-320-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227-1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: 9-anm-iarcomment@faa.gov. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2002-NM-320-AD" in the subject line and need not be submitted in triplicate. Comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 or 2000 or ASCII text.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplanes, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary Oltman, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 917-6443; fax (425) 917-6590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA received a report that parts of the radial lap splices at the station 2150 aft pressure bulkhead were covered up by a web repair made to the aft pressure bulkhead during production of two Boeing Model 777-200 series airplanes. The radial lap splices at the station 2150 aft pressure bulkhead require repetitive inspections as an Airworthiness Limitation, which is defined as Structural Significant Item (SSI) 53-80-I13 in Section 9 of Boeing Document D622W001, 777 Maintenance Planning Data. However, the web repairs made to the two Model 777-200 series airplanes could interfere with the detection of cracks or damage to the web during the required repetitive inspections. Undetected cracks or damage to the web, if not found and repaired, could result in the cracks enlarging, leading to rapid decompression of the airplane and consequent possible loss of flight critical systems.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0039, dated November 14, 2002, which describes procedures for a surface high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection of the web of the aft pressure bulkhead, repetitive inspections, and corrective action, if necessary. The corrective action involves repairing any crack or damage found during any surface HFEC inspection. The surface HFEC inspections required by this AD would replace repetitive inspections of the radial lap splices in the local area of the web repair, required as an Airworthiness Limitation, which is defined as SSI 53-80-I13 in Section 9 of Boeing Document D622W001, 777 Maintenance Planning Data. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

Explanation of Requirements of the Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design that may be registered in the United States at some time in the future, this AD is being issued to detect and correct cracks or damage to the web of the aft pressure bulkhead, which could enlarge if undetected, leading to rapid decompression of the airplane and consequent possible loss of flight critical systems. This AD requires a surface HFEC inspection of the web of the aft pressure bulkhead, repetitive inspections, and corrective action, if necessary. The actions are required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

Difference Between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletin

Operators should note that, although the service bulletin specifies that operators may contact the manufacturer for repair data if cracks or damage is found, this proposed AD would require operators to repair any crack or damage per a method approved by the FAA, or per data meeting the type certification basis of the airplane approved by a Boeing Company Designated Engineering Representative who has been authorized by the FAA to make such findings.

Cost Impact

None of the airplanes affected by this action are on the U.S. Register. All airplanes included in the applicability of this rule currently are operated by non-U.S. operators under foreign registry; therefore, they are not directly affected by this AD action. However, the FAA considers that this rule is necessary to ensure that the unsafe condition is addressed in the event that any of these subject airplanes are imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future.

Should an affected airplane be imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, it would require approximately between 2 and 4 work hours (depending on airplane configuration) to accomplish the required actions, at an average labor rate of \$65 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this AD would be between \$130 and \$260 per airplane (depending on airplane configuration). Manufacturer warranty remedies may be available for labor costs associated with this AD. As a result, the costs attributable to the AD may be less than stated above.

Determination of Rule's Effective Date

Since this AD action does not affect any airplane that is currently on the U.S. register, it has no adverse economic impact and imposes no additional burden on any person. Therefore, prior notice and public procedures hereon are unnecessary and the amendment may be made effective in less than 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule and was not preceded by notice and opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified under the caption ADDRESSES. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the AD action and determining whether additional rulemaking action would be needed.

Submit comments using the following format:

- Organize comments issue-by-issue. For example, discuss a request to change the compliance time and a request to change the service bulletin reference as two separate issues.
- For each issue, state what specific change to the AD is being requested.
- Include justification (e.g., reasons or data) for each request.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the rule that might suggest a need to modify the rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this AD will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this rule must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 2002-NM-320-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein 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. Therefore, it is determined that this final rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (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. A final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE



Aircraft Certification Service
Washington, DC

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

We post ADs on the internet at "www.faa.gov"

The following Airworthiness Directive issued by the Federal Aviation Administration in accordance with the provisions of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 39, applies to an aircraft model of which our records indicate you may be the registered owner. Airworthiness Directives affect aviation safety and are regulations which require immediate attention. You are cautioned that no person may operate an aircraft to which an Airworthiness Directive applies, except in accordance with the requirements of the Airworthiness Directive (reference 14 CFR part 39, subpart 39.3).

2004-03-05 Boeing: Amendment 39-13449. Docket 2002-NM-320-AD.

Applicability: Model 777-200 series airplanes, variable numbers WA207 and WB325; certificated in any category.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To detect and correct cracks or damage to the web of the aft pressure bulkhead, which could enlarge if undetected, leading to rapid decompression of the airplane and consequent possible loss of flight critical systems, accomplish the following:

Initial and Repetitive Inspections

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 30,000 total flight cycles, do a surface high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection to find cracks or damage to the web of the station 2150 aft pressure bulkhead from the forward side, per the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0039, dated November 14, 2002. Repeat the surface HFEC inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 16,000 flight cycles.

Corrective Action

(b) If any crack or damage is found during any surface HFEC inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, and the service bulletin specifies to ask Boeing for repair data: Before further flight, repair per a method approved by the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA; or per data meeting the type certification basis of the airplane approved by a Boeing Company Designated Engineering Representative who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make such findings. For a repair method to be approved by the Manager, Seattle ACO, as required by this paragraph, the Manager's approval letter must specifically refer to this AD.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(c) In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, the Manager, Seattle ACO, FAA, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance (AMOCs) for this AD.

Incorporation by Reference

(d) Unless otherwise specified by this AD, the actions shall be done in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777-53A0039, dated November 14, 2002. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplanes, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle,

Washington 98124-2207. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

Effective Date

(e) This amendment becomes effective on February 24, 2004.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 29, 2004.

Kalene C. Yanamura,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 04-2464 Filed 2-6-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P