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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2012-0728; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-050-AD; Amendment 39-17234; AD 2012-21-18]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain The Boeing Company Model MD-90-30 airplanes. This AD was prompted by reports of fatigue cracks found in Stringer 11 at the outboard flap, inboard drive hinge at Station Xrs=164.000. This AD requires repetitive inspections for cracks in Stringer 11, and a splice repair if necessary; and repetitive post-repair inspections, and repair if necessary. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct such cracking, which could result in the wing structure not supporting the limit load condition, which could lead to loss of the structural integrity of the wing.

DATES: This AD is effective December 5, 2012.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD as of December 5, 2012.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, MC D800-0019, Long Beach, CA 90846-0001; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 2; fax 206-766-5683; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may review copies of the referenced 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.

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 (phone: 800-647-5527) is 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: Roger Durbin, Airframe Branch, ANM-120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; phone: (562) 627-5233; fax: (562) 627-5210; email: roger.durbin@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an AD that would apply to the specified products. That NPRM published in the Federal Register on August 1, 2012 (77 FR 45515). That NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections for cracks in Stringer 11, and a splice repair if necessary; and repetitive post-repair inspections, and repair if necessary.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We have considered the comment received. Boeing supports the NPRM (77 FR 45515, August 1, 2012).

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD as proposed—except for minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM (77 FR 45515, August 1, 2012) for correcting the unsafe condition; and

Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM (77 FR 45515, August 1, 2012).

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 52 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspection	13 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$1,105 per inspection cycle.	None	\$1,105 per inspection cycle	\$57,460 per inspection cycle
Post-repair inspection	13 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$1,105.	None	\$1,105	\$57,460.

We estimate the following costs to do any necessary repairs that would be required based on the results of the inspection. We have no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need these repairs:

On-Condition Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
Splice repair per wing	93 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$7,905	\$28,126	\$36,031

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions of the post-repair inspection specified in this AD.

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),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) 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.

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 airworthiness directive (AD):



2012-21-18 The Boeing Company: Amendment 39-17234; Docket No. FAA-2012-0728; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-050-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective December 5, 2012.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model MD-90-30 airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD90-57A030, dated February 14, 2012.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC)/Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of fatigue cracks found in Stringer 11 at the outboard flap, inboard drive hinge at Station Xrs=164.000. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct such cracking, which could result in the wing structure not supporting the limit load condition, which could lead to loss of the structural integrity of the wing.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Repetitive Inspections

Before the accumulation of 14,000 total flight cycles, or within 9,470 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD: Whichever occurs later, do an in-tank eddy current high frequency (ETHF) inspection for cracks in Stringer 11 at the outboard flap, inboard drive hinge at Station Xrs=164.000 of the left and right wings, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD90-57A030, dated February 14, 2012. If no cracking is found, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 31,000 flight cycles.

(h) Splice Repair

If any cracking is found during any inspection required by paragraph (g) of this AD: Before further flight, do a splice repair, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD90-57A030, dated February 14, 2012.

(i) Post-Repair Inspection

Within 42,000 flight cycles after doing the splice repair specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Do an ETHF inspection for cracks in Stringer 11 at the outboard flap, inboard drive hinge at Station Xrs=164.000, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD90-57A030, dated February 14, 2012. Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 31,000 flight cycles. If any crack is found: Before further flight, repair the crack using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD.

(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the ACO, send it to the attention of the person identified in the Related Information section of this AD.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(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 The Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Los Angeles ACO to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and 14 CFR 25.571, Amendment 54, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(k) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Roger Durbin, Airframe Branch, ANM-120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; phone: (562) 627-5233; fax: (562) 627-5210; email: roger.durbin@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

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

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD90-57A030, dated February 14, 2012.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For The Boeing Company Airplanes service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, MC D800-0019, Long Beach, CA 90846-0001; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 2; fax 206-766-5683; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(4) You may view this service information at 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.

(5) You may view this 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/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on October 12, 2012.
Kalene C. Yanamura,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.