This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39


RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain The Boeing Company Model 747–100, –200B, –200C, –200F, –300, –400, –400D, and –400F series airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports of significant fuselage skin damage at certain parts of the dorsal fairing, due to wear from the dorsal fairing. This proposed AD would require repetitive detailed inspections for wear and cracks of the fuselage skin under the dorsal fairing, and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. This proposed AD would also require repetitive post-repair external surface high frequency eddy current inspections of the blended areas of the skin and detailed inspections of the unrepaired areas, and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. We are proposing this AD to detect and correct fuselage skin damage of the dorsal fairing area, which could result in skin cracking and consequent depressurization of the airplane.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by June 19, 2015.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

• Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.


• Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

• Federal eRulemaking Portal: Comments Invited


Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2015–1270; 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 proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Office (phone: 800–647–5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA–2015–1270; Directorate Identifier 2014–NM–222–AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to http://www.regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

We received reports of significant fuselage skin damage at the dorsal fairing forward of station (STA) 2280, due to wear from the dorsal fairing. These two airplanes had accumulated 45,707 and 71,702 total flight hours. The skin damage occurred from inadequate clearance between fuselage crown skin and the lower aft corners of the dorsal fairing. Affected airplanes are limited to those delivered or retrofitted with certain dorsal fairing assemblies. Airplanes with other dorsal fairing configurations are not expected to develop skin wear. This inadequate clearance, if not corrected, could result in skin cracking and consequent depressurization of the airplane.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

We reviewed Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2876, dated October 22, 2014. This service information describes procedures for repetitive inspections, repair, and modification of the fuselage skin under the dorsal fairing. Refer to this service information for information on the procedures and compliance times. This service information is reasonably available at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2015–1270. Or see ADDRESSES for other ways to access this service information.

FAA’s Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.
Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information identified previously, except as discussed under “Differences Between this Proposed AD and the Service Information.”

The phrase “related investigative actions” is used in this proposed AD. Related investigative actions are follow-on actions that (1) are related to the primary actions, and (2) further investigate the nature of any condition found. Related investigative actions in an AD could include, for example, inspections.

The phrase “corrective actions” is used in this proposed AD. “Corrective actions” are actions that correct or address any condition found. Corrective actions in an AD could include, for example, repairs.

Explanation of “RC” Steps in Service Information

The FAA worked in conjunction with industry, under the Airworthiness Directives Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC), to enhance the AD system. One enhancement was a new process for annotating which steps in the service information are required for compliance with an AD. Differentiating these steps from other tasks in the service information is expected to improve an owner’s/operator’s understanding of crucial AD requirements and help provide consistent judgment in AD compliance. The steps that are identified as RC (required for compliance) in any service information identified previously have a direct effect on detecting, preventing, resolving, or eliminating an identified unsafe condition.

Steps that are identified as RC must be done to comply with the proposed AD. However, steps that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those steps that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator’s maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an alternative method of compliance (AMOC), provided the steps identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in a serviceable condition. Any substitutions or changes to steps identified as RC will require approval of an AMOC.

Differences Between This Proposed AD and the Service Information

Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2876, dated October 22, 2014, specifies to contact the manufacturer for instructions on how to repair certain conditions, but this proposed AD would require repairing those conditions in one of the following ways:

- In accordance with a method that we approve; or
- Using data that meet the certification basis of the airplane, and that have been approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) whom we have authorized to make those findings.

Tables 4 and 5 in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2876, dated October 22, 2014, specify accomplishing the post-repair inspections identified in Part 8 of the service bulletin. Part 8 of the service bulletin allows the option of high frequency eddy current (HFEC) or low frequency eddy current (LFE) inspections of the blended areas of the skin; however, this proposed AD does not allow the option of an LFE inspection. This difference has been coordinated with Boeing.

Tables 3, 6, and 7 in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2876, dated October 22, 2014, specify post-modification inspections at certain fuselage crown skin locations, which may be used in support of compliance with section 121.1109(c)(2) or 129.109(b)(2) of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 121.1109(c)(2) or 129.109(b)(2)). However, this NPRM does not propose to require those post-modification inspections. This difference has been coordinated with Boeing.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 93 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Labor cost</th>
<th>Parts cost</th>
<th>Cost per product</th>
<th>Cost on U.S. operators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspections</td>
<td>Up to 15 work-hours × $85 per hour = $1,275.</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>Up to $1,275 per inspection cycle.</td>
<td>Up to $118,575 per inspection cycle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed 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

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would 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 this proposed regulation:

(1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
(2) Is not a “significant rule” under the 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.
The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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):


(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by June 19, 2015.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability


(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of significant fuselage skin damage at the dorsal fairing forward of station (STA) 2280 due to depressurization of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Inspections and Repair

At the applicable time specified in tables 1 and 2 of paragraph 1.E, “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2876, dated October 22, 2014, except as provided by paragraph (j)(1) of this AD, do a detailed inspection of the fuselage skin damage of the dorsal fairing area, which could result in skin cracking and consequent depressurization of the airplane.

(k) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Seattle 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 paragraph (k)(1) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(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 requested by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that 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.

(4) Except as required by paragraph (j)(2) of this AD: If any service information contains steps that are identified as RC (Required for Compliance), those steps must be done to comply with this AD; any steps that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those steps that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator’s maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the steps identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in a serviceable condition. Any substitutions or changes to steps identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

(l) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Nathan Weigand, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057–3356; phone: 425–917–6428; fax: 425–917–6590; email: nathan.p.weigand@faa.gov.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P.O. Box 3707, MC 2H–65, Seattle, WA 98124–2207; phone: 206–544–5000, extension 1; fax: 206–766–5680; Internet: https://www.myboeingfleet.com. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 252–227–1221.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 27, 2015.

Michael Kaszynski,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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