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: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Boeing Company Model 737–300, –400, and –500 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by reports of cracks in the horizontal stabilizer lower skins. This AD requires inspections for cracking of the horizontal stabilizer lower skin, and corrective actions if necessary; and also provides actions that would terminate certain repetitive inspections. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective May 2, 2017.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of May 2, 2017.


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–2016–9068; 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 Docket 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.


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Boeing Company Model 737–300, –400, and –500 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on September 8, 2016 (81 FR 62022) (“the NPRM”). The NPRM was prompted by reports of cracks in the horizontal stabilizer lower skins. The NPRM proposed to require inspections for cracking of the horizontal stabilizer lower skin, including repetitive inspections, as applicable, and corrective actions if necessary; and also proposed actions that would terminate certain repetitive inspections. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks in horizontal stabilizer lower skins resulting in reduced local stiffness of the horizontal stabilizer, which can cause heavy vibration leading to loss of structural integrity of the horizontal stabilizer.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. The following presents the comments received on the NPRM and the FAA’s response to each comment.

Support for the NPRM

Boeing expressed support for the NPRM.

Request To Revise Repair Instructions

All Nippon Airways (ANA) requested that we revise paragraphs (h)(1) and (h)(3) of the proposed AD to state “repair common to the rear spar lower chord between station (STA) 83.50 and STA 249.10,” instead of “repair.” ANA stated that there might be a repair installed on the lower skin of the horizontal stabilizer that is not addressed in Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 737–55–1059, Revision 1, dated April 6, 2016 (“SASB 737–55–1059 R1”). ANA explained that some structural repair manual repairs and external doublers are not applicable to the inspection area specified in SASB 737–55–1059 R1.

We agree with ANA’s request. Specifying the location of the applicable repairs may reduce potential confusion. Therefore, we have revised paragraphs (h)(1), (h)(2), and (h)(3) of this AD to specify the location of the applicable repairs.

Request To Clarify Fastener Requirements

ANA requested that we clarify the fastener requirements. ANA stated that figure 3 in Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 737–55–1059, dated September 10, 1998, specifies to use blind rivets and Hi-lok fasteners; however, compliance table 2, note (b), in SASB 737–55–1059 R1, states that doublers installed with solid rivets do not need to be inspected for any loose or missing fasteners. ANA explained that Boeing told ANA that Hi-lok fasteners do not require inspection for any loose or missing fasteners.

We agree to clarify the fastener requirements. We infer that ANA is requesting that we update paragraph (h) of this AD to specify that Hi-lok fasteners do not require inspection. We have determined that Hi-lok fasteners do not require inspection. Therefore, we have added paragraph (i)(3) to this AD to specify that where SASB 737–55–1059 R1 specifies that doublers installed with solid rivets do not need to be inspected for loose or missing fasteners, this AD does not require doublers installed with solid rivets or Hi-lok fasteners to be inspected for loose or missing fasteners. We have also revised paragraph (h)(1) of this AD to reference this exception.

Request To Revise Configuration Description

ANA requested that we revise paragraph (h) of the proposed AD to refer to the horizontal stabilizer configuration with the applicable repair installed side only. ANA asserted that the wording of paragraph (h) of the proposed AD could be interpreted to require inspection of both the repaired and unrepaired sides of the horizontal stabilizer.

We agree with ANA’s request. The wording in the proposed AD is not clear regarding what is required if an airplane has left and right stabilizers that are different configurations. For example, the left-side stabilizer may have a repair installed common to the rear spar lower chord (configuration 2), whereas the right side may not have a repair (configuration 1). We have revised the affected airplanes in paragraph (g) of this AD from “Group 1, Configuration 1,
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):


(a) Effective Date
This AD is effective May 2, 2017.

(b) Affected Airplanes
None.

(c) Applicability
(1) This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 737–300, –400, and –500 series airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 737–55–1059, Revision 1, dated April 6, 2016 (“SASB 737–55–1059 R1”).

(2) Installation of Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01219SE (http://rgl.faa.gov/Regulatory_and_Guidance_Library/rsrgc/nt/0/ebsd16ec7b3012368257c6b30045557a7c/SF FILE/ST01219SE.pdf) does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01219SE is installed, a “change in product” alternative method of compliance (AMOC) approval request is not necessary to comply with the requirements of 14 CFR 39.17.

(d) Subject
Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 55: Horizontal stabilizer.

(e) Unsafe Condition
This AD was prompted by reports of cracks in horizontal stabilizer lower skins. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks in horizontal stabilizer lower skins, resulting in reduced local stiffness of the stabilizer, which can cause heavy vibration leading to loss of structural integrity of the horizontal stabilizer.

(f) Compliance
Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Inspections, Related Investigative Actions, and Corrective Actions for Configuration 1 Horizontal Stabilizers on Group 1 Airplanes
For any Configuration 1 horizontal stabilizer on Group 1 airplanes, as identified in SASB 737–55–1059 R1: Except as specified in paragraph (j)(1) of this AD, at the applicable time specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of SASB 737–55–1059 R1, do a detailed inspection for cracking of the horizontal stabilizer lower skin; and do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions; in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of SASB 737–55–1059 R1, except as specified in paragraph (i)(2) of this AD. Do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions before further flight. Repeat the inspection of the horizontal stabilizer lower skin, if applicable, thereafter at the applicable intervals specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of SASB 737–55–1059 R1. Options specified in SASB 737–55–1059 R1 for accomplishing the inspections are acceptable for the corresponding requirements of this paragraph provided that the inspections are done at the applicable times in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of the SASB 737–55–1059 R1.

(h) Inspections, Related Investigative Actions, and Corrective Actions for Configuration 2 Horizontal Stabilizers on Group 1 Airplanes
For any Configuration 2 horizontal stabilizer on Group 1 airplanes, as identified in SASB 737–55–1059 R1: Except as specified in paragraph (i)(1) of this AD, at the applicable time specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of SASB 737–55–1059 R1, do the actions specified in paragraphs (h)(1), (h)(2), and (h)(3) of this AD; and do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions; in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of SASB 737–55–1059 R1, except as specified in paragraph (i)(2) of this AD. Do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions before further flight. Repeat the inspections specified in paragraphs (h)(1), (h)(2), and (h)(3) of this AD, if applicable, thereafter at the applicable intervals specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of SASB 737–55–1059 R1. Options specified in SASB 737–55–1059 R1, for accomplishing the inspections are acceptable for the corresponding requirements of this paragraph provided that the inspections are done at the applicable times in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of SASB 737–55–1059 R1.

(i) Service Information Exceptions
(1) Where SASB 737–55–1059 R1 specifies that doublers installed with solid rivets do not need to be inspected for loose or missing fasteners, this AD does not require doublers installed with solid rivets or Hi-lok fasteners to be inspected for loose or missing fasteners.

(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 paragraph (k) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-LAACO-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 used for any repair, modification, or alteration 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. To be approved, the repair method, modification, deviation, or alteration deviation must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(k) Related Information
For more information about this AD, contact George Garrido, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120L, FAA, Los Angeles ACO, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712–4137; phone: 562–627–5232; fax: 562–627–5210; email: george.garrido@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.


(ii) Reserved.

(3) For Boeing service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing.

We may view this 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 425–227–1221.

A notice has been published in the Federal Register for the availability of this service information at the FAA (RIN 2120–AA64). 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.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39


BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

Airworthiness Directives; Textron Aviation Inc. (Type Certificate Recipient) Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Textron Aviation Inc. (Textron) Model 680 airplanes. This AD was prompted by Textron’s report of a manufacturing defect that affects the durability of the aft canted bulkhead metallic structure. This AD requires repetitive inspections of the aft canted bulkhead; repair if necessary; and a modification, which would terminate the repetitive inspections. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective May 2, 2017. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in this AD as of May 2, 2017.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Textron Aviation Inc., P.O. Box 7706, Wichita, KS 67277; telephone 316–517–6215; fax 316–517–5802; email citationpubs@txtav.com; Internet https://support.cessna.com/custsupt/csupport/newlogin.jsp. You may review 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 425–227–1221. It is also available on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2016–3705.

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–2016–3705; or in person at the Docket Office, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

For further information contact:

Phuoc Le, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ACE–118W, Wichita Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, 1801 Airport Road, Room 100, Dwight D. Eisenhower Airport, Wichita, KS 67209; phone: 316–946–4195; fax: 316–946–4107; email: phuoc.le@faa.gov.

Supplementary Information:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain Textron Aviation Inc. Model 680 airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on February 26, 2016 (81 FR 9790) (“the NPRM”). The NPRM was prompted by Textron’s report of a manufacturing defect that affects the durability of the aft canted bulkhead metallic structure. The manufacturing defect directly affects the bond integrity of the vertical and horizontal stiffeners on the aft canted bulkhead metallic structure. The NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections of the aft canted bulkhead and repair if necessary. The NPRM also proposed to require a modification which would terminate the repetitive inspections. We are issuing this AD to prevent disbonding of the horizontal and vertical stiffeners on the aft canted bulkhead. Loss of bond integrity could result in a structural failure that could lead to separation of the cruciform tail and loss of control of the airplane.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. The following presents the comments received on the NPRM and the FAA’s response to each comment.

Request to limit findings to “Disbonding”

NetJets Aviation, Inc. (NetJets) requested that we revise paragraph (h) of the proposed AD to remove “cracked paint” as a possible finding from the inspection. NetJets acknowledged that cracked paint, while not a safety concern on its own, should be investigated to ensure that it is not evidence of disbonding. NetJets indicated that the requirement for a disbond to be repaired per an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) is sufficient to ensure that the safety concern is addressed appropriately.

We agree with the commenter that cracked paint may not be a safety concern on its own; however it is evidence that a disbond of the structure may have occurred and should be investigated further to ensure there is no evidence of disbonding. Thus, if cracked paint is found, operators must contact the FAA for procedures to determine whether the cracked paint was an indication of disbonding. We have revised paragraph (h) of this AD to clarify that operators must obtain instructions from the FAA and comply with those instructions.

Request to have Cessna Engineering Drawing BE Made Available

NetJets indicated that paragraph (n)(2) of the proposed AD states that the required service information is available from Textron. However, NetJets stated that Textron does not provide owners/operators with access to Cessna Engineering Drawing 6991115 (“Drawing 6991115”), which is required for compliance with paragraph (i) of the proposed AD. NetJets added that the required service information is not available at the Federal Register and is not available to owners/operators through the source identified in the proposed AD. NetJets indicated that Cessna Service Bulletin SB680–53–08, dated September 28, 2015, states that only Textron-owned service centers can complete the modification and have access to Drawing 6991115. NetJets stated that access to Drawing 6991115 should be made available to owners/operators, and the proposed AD should...