and record the results. When taking a thickness reading, rotate the transducer slightly back and forth and experiment with the angle of contact to produce the lowest thickness reading possible. Pay close attention to the A-scan display to assure that the thickness gate is triggering off of maximized backwall echoes.

• **Note:** A reading shall not exceed .041-inch. If a reading exceeds .041-inch, repeat steps 13 and 14 of the Instrument Setup section before proceeding further.

6. If the A-trace is unsteady or the thickness reading is clearly wrong, adjust the signal gain and/or gate setting to obtain reasonable and steady readings. If any instrument setting is adjusted, repeat steps 13 and 14 of the Instrument Setup section before proceeding further.

7. In areas where obstructions are present, take a data point as close to the correct area as possible.

• **Note:** The strut wall contains a fabrication bead at approximately 40% of the strut chord. The bead may interfere with accurate measurements in that specific location.

8. A measurement of 0.024-inch or less shall require replacement of the strut prior to further flight.

9. If at any time during testing an area is encountered where a valid thickness measurement cannot be obtained due to a loss of signal strength or quality, the area shall be considered suspect. These areas may have a remaining wall thickness of less than 0.020-inch, which is below the range of this setup, or they may have small areas of localized corrosion or pitting present. The latter case will result in a reduction in signal strength due to the sound being scattered from the rough surface and may result in a signal that includes echoes from the pits as well as the backwall. The suspect area(s) shall be tested with a Maule ''Fabric Tester'' as specified in Piper Service Bulletin No. 528D or 910A.

10. Record the lift strut inspection in the aircraft log book.

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

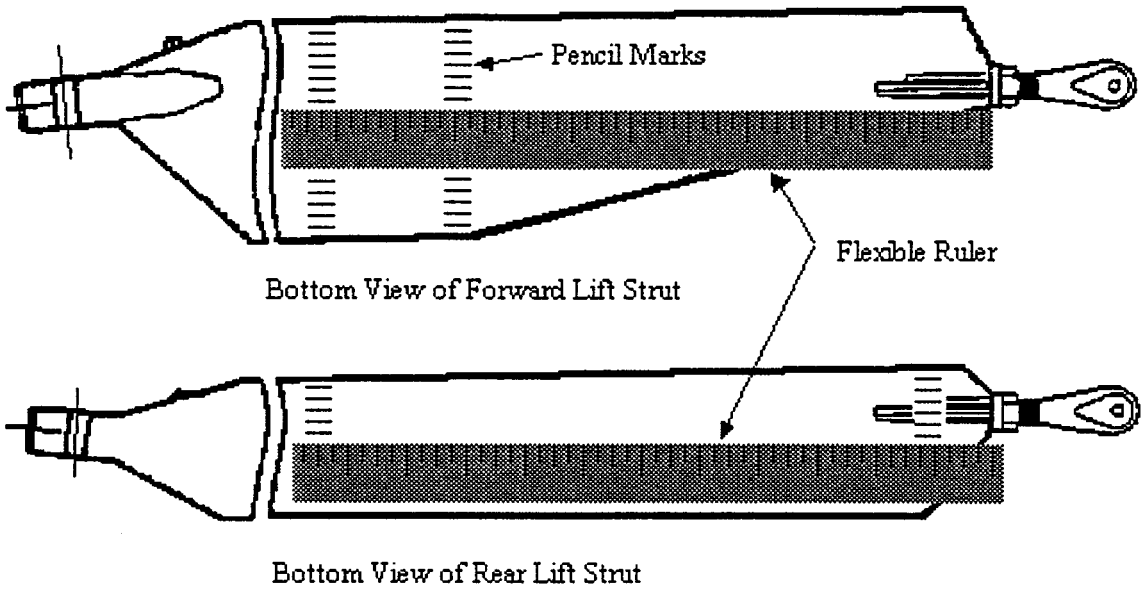

Figure 1

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on December 22, 1998.

Michael Gallagher,

Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–34384 Filed 12–30–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–C

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–CE–83–AD; Amendment 39–10971; AD 99–01–04]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that applies to certain Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 airplanes. This AD requires replacing the left and right rudder bars with improved design rudder bars. This AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for France. The actions specified in this AD are intended to prevent distortion of the original design rudder bars during operation, which could result in reduced or loss of control of the airplane.

DATES: Effective March 12, 1999.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before February 5, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–83–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Service information that applies to this AD may be obtained from Avions Pierre Robin, 1, route de Troyes, 21121 Darois-France; telephone: 80 44 20 50; facsimile: 80 35 60 80. This information may also be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–83–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Karl M. Schletzbaum, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone:

(816) 426–6932; facsimile: (816) 426–2169.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Events Leading to the Issuance of This AD

The Direction Générale de l'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 airplanes. The DGAC reports a case of rudder bar distortion during intensive aerobatic use.

This condition, if not corrected, could result in reduced or loss of control of the airplane.

Relevant Service Information

Avions Pierre Robin has issued Service Bulletin No. 143, dated September 8, 1995, which specifies replacing the left and right rudder bars, part number (P/N) 27.23.05.010 (left) and P/N 27.23.05.020 (right), with improved design rudder bars, P/N 27.40.31.010 (left) and P/N 27.40.31.020 (right).

The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued French AD 95–217(A), dated November 8, 1995, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

The FAA's Determination

This airplane model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above.

The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC; reviewed all available information, including the service information referenced above; and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of the Provisions of This AD

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop in other Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the FAA is issuing an AD. This AD requires replacing the left and right rudder bars, part number (P/N) 27.23.05.010 (left) and P/N 27.23.05.020 (right), with improved design rudder bars, P/N 27.40.31.010 (left) and P/N 27.40.31.020 (right). Accomplishment of the actions of this AD would be required in accordance with the applicable maintenance manual.

Cost Impact

None of the Avions Model R2160 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 this rule 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.

Should an affected airplane be imported and placed on the U.S. Register, accomplishment of the required replacement would take approximately 20 workhours per airplane at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Parts cost approximately $500 per airplane. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of this AD would be $1,700 per airplane that would become registered in the United States.

The Effective Date of This AD

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, 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 an 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.

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 No. 98–CE–83–AD.'' The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein will not have substantial direct effects 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, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

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 copy of the final evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES.**

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, 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 a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

99–01–04 Avions Pierre Robin: Amendment 39–10971; Docket No. 98–CE–83–AD.

Applicability: Model R2160 airplanes, all serial numbers beginning with 250; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (d) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required within the next 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent distortion of the original design rudder bars during operation, which could result in reduced or loss of control of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Replace the left and right rudder bars, part number (P/N) 27.23.05.010 (left) and P/N 27.23.05.020 (right), with improved design rudder bars, P/N 27.40.31.010 (left) and P/N 27.40.31.020 (right), or FAA-approved equivalent part numbers. Accomplish these replacements in accordance with the applicable maintenance manual, as specified in Avions Pierre Robin Service Bulletin No. 143, dated September 8, 1995.

(b) As of the effective date of this AD, no person may install, on any of the affected airplanes, rudder bars that are not of improved design, P/N 27.40.31.010 (left) and P/N 27.40.31.020 (right), or FAA-approved equivalent part numbers.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(d) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an equivalent level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Small Airplane Directorate.

(e) Questions or technical information related to Avions Pierre Robin Service Bulletin No. 143, dated September 8, 1995, should be directed to Avions Pierre Robin, 1 route de Troyes 21121 Darois, France; telephone: 03.80.44.20.50; facsimile: 03.80.35.60.80. This service information may be examined at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in French AD 95–217(A), dated November 8, 1995.

(f) This amendment becomes effective on March 12, 1999.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on December 22, 1998.

Michael Gallagher,

Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–34383 Filed 12–30–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–CE–100–AD; Amendment 39–10974; AD 99–01–07]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; British Aerospace Jetstream Model 3101 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Direct final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that applies to certain British Aerospace Jetstream Model 3101 airplanes. This AD requires installing additional stringers at the lower fuselage skin panels between the main and rear spar frames. This AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom. The actions specified in this AD are intended to correct a strength deficiency in the area of the lower fuselage skin panels between the main rear spar frames, which, if not corrected, could result in reduced or loss of control of the airplane during maximum speed limit operations.

DATES: Effective March 19, 1999.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of March 19, 1999.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before February 12, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–100–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Service information that applies to this AD may be obtained from British Aerospace Regional Aircraft, Prestwick International Airport, Ayrshire, KA9 2RW, Scotland; telephone: (01292) 479888; facsimile: (01292) 479703. This information may also be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–100–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. S.M. Nagarajan, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 426–6932; facsimile: (816) 426–2169.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Events Leading to the Issuance of This AD

The Civil Airworthiness Authority (CAA), which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain British Aerospace Jetstream Model 3101 airplanes. The CAA reports that a strength deficiency could exist in the area of the lower fuselage skin panels between the main rear spar frames (FrameStations 223 and 257.8). The affected airplanes may not be able to meet the design requirements for lateral load cases.

This condition, if not corrected, could result in reduced or loss of control of the airplane during maximum speed limit operations.

Relevant Service Information

British Aerospace has issued Jetstream ServiceBulletin 53–JM7297, Original Issue: May 10, 1984, which specifies procedures for installing additional stringers at the lower fuselage skin panels between the main and rear spar frames (Frame Stations 223 and 257.8). This is referred to as Jetstream Modification JM 7297.

The CAA classified this service bulletin as mandatory in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in the United Kingdom. The CAA classifying a service bulletin as mandatory is the same in the United Kingdom as the FAA issuing an AD in the United States.