DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–NM–193–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 767 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Boeing Model 767 series airplanes. This proposal would require a one-time inspection to detect discrepancies of the wire expando sleeve of the wire bundles adjacent to the landing gear control lever module; certain follow-on actions and repair, if necessary; and wrapping the wire expando sleeve with tape or zippertubing and tape. This proposal is prompted by reports indicating that the landing gear failed to extend on an in-service airplane, and that the cable of the landing gear control lever was severed on a second in-service airplane. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent interference and consequent arcing between the landing gear control lever and the wire bundles adjacent to the landing gear control lever module, which could result in inability to extend the landing gear prior to landing.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 5, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–NM–193–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elias Natsiopoulos, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM–130S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–1279; fax (425) 227–1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed 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 above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed 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 summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket Number 98–NM–193–AD.'' The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–NM–193–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received a report indicating that, prior to landing an in-service Boeing Model 767 series airplane, the flightcrew was unable to extend the landing gear because the landing gear control lever failed to move from the ''UP'' to ''OFF'' position. Consequently, the flightcrew was forced to extend the landing gear by depressurizing the center hydraulic system.

In addition, the FAA has received a report indicating that, following take-off of a second Boeing Model 767 series airplane, the flightcrew was unable to retract the landing gear. The flightcrew was forced to return the airplane to its original departure airport. Investigation revealed that the landing gear control lever interfered with the wire expando sleeve, which contains the wire bundles of the alternate extension system of the landing gear. This interference caused the wires of the alternate extension system of the landing gear to arc. Repeated arcing over a period of time severed the cable of the landing gear control lever. This condition, if not corrected, could result in inability to extend the landing gear prior to landing.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767–32A0163, dated March 5, 1998, and Boeing Service Bulletin 767–32A0163, Revision 1, dated October 1, 1998. The alert service bulletin and Revision 1 describe procedures for a one-time visual inspection to detect discrepancies (i.e., cuts, abrasions, fraying, and arcing) of the wire expando sleeve of the wire bundles adjacent to the landing gear control lever module; certain follow-on actions (i.e., visual inspection of the varglas layer and wire bundles adjacent to the landing gear control lever module), if necessary; and repair, if necessary. The alert service bulletin and Revision 1 also describe procedures for wrapping the wire expando sleeve with tape or zippertubing and tape. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the alert service bulletin or Revision 1 is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other products of this same type design, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the alert service bulletin or Revision 1 described previously.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 666 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 268 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

It would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. The cost of required parts would be nominal. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $16,080, or $60 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD

action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would 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 proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that 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); and (3) if promulgated, 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 draft regulatory 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.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 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:

Boeing: Docket 98–NM–193–AD.

Applicability: Model 767 series airplanes, as listed in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767–32A0163, Revision 1, October 1, 1998; 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 (b) 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 as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent interference and consequent arcing between the movement of the landing gear control lever and the wire bundles adjacent to the landing gear control lever module, which could result in inability to extend the landing gear prior to landing, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, perform a one-time visual inspection to detect discrepancies (i.e., cut, abrasion, fraying, and arcing) of the wire expando sleeve of the wire bundles adjacent to the landing gear control lever module, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767–32A0163, dated March 5, 1998, or Revision 1, dated October 1, 1998.

(1) If no discrepancy of the wire expando sleeve is detected, prior to further flight, wrap the wire expando sleeve with tape or zippertubing and tape, in accordance with the alert service bulletin or Revision 1.

(2) If any discrepancy of the wire expando sleeve is detected, prior to further flight, perform a visual inspection to detect discrepancies of the varglas layer, in accordance with the alert service bulletin or Revision 1.

(i) If no discrepancy of the varglas layer is detected, prior to further flight, repair the wire expando sleeve and wrap it with tape or zippertubing and tape, in accordance with the alert service bulletin or Revision 1.

(ii) If any discrepancy of the varglas layer is detected, prior to further flight, perform a visual inspection to detect discrepancies of the wire bundles, in accordance with the alert service bulletin or Revision 1.

(A) If no discrepancy of the wire bundles is detected, prior to further flight, rewrap the wires with new varglas layer, repair the wire expando sleeve, and wrap the wire expando sleeve with tape or zippertubing and tape, in accordance with the alert service bulletin or Revision 1.

(B) If any discrepancy of the wire bundles is detected, prior to further flight, repair the wires, rewrap the wire bundles with new varglas layer, repair wire expando sleeve, and wrap the wire expando sleeve with tape or zippertubing and tape, in accordance with the alert service bulletin or Revision 1.

(b) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Seattle ACO.

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

(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.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on February 9, 1999.

John J. Hickey,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96–NM–214–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; British Aerospace (Jetstream) Model 4101 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: This document revises an earlier proposed airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to all British Aerospace (Jetstream) Model 4101 airplanes. That proposal would have required repetitively inspecting to detect damage of the structure associated with the engine nacelle fairing attached to the wing flaps, and repair of any damage found; drilling a new drain hole in each engine nacelle fairing; and applying a sealant to the gap between the wing flap and engine nacelle fairing. That proposal was prompted by reports of fatigue cracks found in the structure that attaches the engine nacelle fairing to the wing flaps. This new action revises the proposed AD by adding requirements to perform corrective actions for discrepancies and accomplish a modification that would terminate the repetitive inspections. This new action also would limit the applicability. The actions specified by this new proposed AD are intended to prevent such fatigue cracking, which could result in the partial or complete separation of the fairing from the wing flap, and consequent additional structural damage to the airframe and/or reduced controllability of the airplane.