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MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD

5 CFR Part 1201

Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment

AGENCY: Merit Systems Protection Board.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule adjusts the level of civil monetary penalties (CMPs) in regulations maintained and enforced by the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) with an annual adjustment under the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 (the 2015 Act) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance.

DATES: This final rule is effective on January 24, 2023.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Everling, Acting Clerk of the Board, Merit Systems Protection Board, 1615 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20419; phone: (202) 653-7200; fax: (202) 653-7130; or email: mspb@mspb.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (the 1990 Act), Public Law 101-410, provided for the regular evaluation of CMPs by Federal agencies. Periodic inflationary adjustments of CMPs ensure that the consequences of statutory violations adequately reflect the gravity of such offenses and that CMPs are properly accounted for and collected by the Federal Government. In April 1996, the 1990 Act was amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (the 1996 Act), Public Law 104-134, requiring Federal agencies to adjust their CMPs at least once every four years. However, because inflationary adjustments to CMPs were statutorily capped at ten percent of the maximum penalty amount, but only required to be

calculated every four years, CMPs in many cases did not correspond with the true measure of inflation over the preceding four-year period, leading to a decline in the real value of the penalty. To remedy this decline, the 2015 Act (section 701 of Pub. L. 114-74) requires agencies to adjust CMP amounts with annual inflationary adjustments through a rulemaking using a methodology mandated by the legislation. The purpose of these adjustments is to maintain the deterrent effect of civil penalties.

A civil monetary penalty is “any penalty, fine, or other sanction” that: (1) “is for a specific amount” or “has a maximum amount” under Federal law; and (2) a Federal agency assesses or enforces “pursuant to an administrative proceeding or a civil action in the Federal courts.” 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

The MSPB is authorized to assess CMPs pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 1215(a)(3) and 5 U.S.C. 7326 in disciplinary actions brought by the Special Counsel. The corresponding MSPB regulation for both CMPs is 5 CFR 1201.126(a). As required by the 2015 Act, and pursuant to guidance issued by OMB, MSPB is now making an annual adjustment for 2023, according to the prescribed formulas.

II. Calculation of Adjustment

The CMP listed in 5 U.S.C. 1215(a)(3) was established in 1978 with the enactment of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA), Public Law 95-454, section 202(a), 92 Stat. 1121-30 (Oct. 13, 1978), and originally codified at 5 U.S.C. 1207(b). That CMP was last amended by section 106 of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012, Public Law 112-199, 12 Stat. 1468 (Nov. 27, 2012), now codified at 5 U.S.C. 1215(a)(3), which provided for a CMP “not to exceed \$1,000.” The CMP authorized in 5 U.S.C. 7326 was established in 2012 by section 4 of the Hatch Act Modernization Act of 2012 (Hatch Act), Public Law 112-230, 126 Stat. 1617 (Dec. 28, 2012), which provided for a CMP “not to exceed \$1,000.” On January 21, 2022, MSPB issued a final rule which increased the maximum CMP allowed under both 5 U.S.C. 1215(a)(3) and 5 U.S.C. 7326 to \$1,195 for the year 2022. See 87 FR 3175 (January 21, 2022). This increase reflected the annual increase for the year 2022 mandated by the 2015 Act.

On December 15, 2022, OMB issued guidance on calculating the annual inflationary adjustment for 2023. See Memorandum from Shalanda D. Young, Director, OMB, to Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies re: Implementation of Penalty Inflation Adjustments for 2023, Pursuant to the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015, M-23-05 (Dec. 15, 2022). Therein, OMB notified agencies that the annual adjustment multiplier for 2023, based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), is 1.07745 and that the 2023 annual adjustment amount is obtained by multiplying the 2022 penalty amount by the 2023 annual adjustment multiplier, and rounding to the nearest dollar. Therefore, the new maximum penalty under the CSRA and the Hatch Act is $\$1,195 \times 1.07745 = \$1,288.00$.

III. Effective Date of Penalties

The revised CMP amounts will go into effect on January 24, 2023. All violations for which CMPs are assessed after the effective date of this rule will be assessed at the adjusted penalty level regardless of whether the violation occurred before the effective date.

IV. Procedural Requirements

A. Administrative Procedure Act

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b), MSPB has determined that good cause exists for waiving the general notice of proposed rulemaking and public comment procedures as to these technical amendments. The notice and comment procedures are being waived because Congress has specifically exempted agencies from these requirements when implementing the 2015 Act. The 2015 Act explicitly requires the agency to make subsequent annual adjustments notwithstanding 5 U.S.C. 553, the section of the Administrative Procedure Act that normally requires agencies to engage in notice and comment. It is also in the public interest that the adjusted rates for CMPs under the CSRA and the Hatch Act become effective as soon as possible to maintain their effective deterrent effect.

B. Regulatory Impact Analysis: Executive Order 12866

The MSPB has determined that this is not a significant regulatory action under

E.O. 12866. Therefore, no regulatory impact analysis is required.

C. Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) requires an agency to prepare a regulatory flexibility analysis for rules unless the agency certifies that the rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The RFA applies only to rules for which an agency is required to first publish a proposed rule. See 5 U.S.C. 603(a) and 604(a). As discussed above, the 2015 Act does not require agencies to first publish a proposed rule when adjusting CMPs within their jurisdiction. Thus, the RFA does not apply to this final rule.

D. Paperwork Reduction Act

This document does not contain information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

E. Congressional Review Act

Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. 801, *et seq.*), the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs designated this rule as not a “major rule” as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

List of Subjects in 5 CFR Part 1201

Administrative practice and procedure, Civil rights, Government employees.

For the reasons set forth above, 5 CFR part 1201 is amended as follows:

PART 1201—PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 1201 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 1204, 1305, and 7701, and 38 U.S.C. 4331, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1201.126 [Amended]

■ 2. Section 1201.126 is amended in paragraph (a) by removing “\$1,195” and adding in its place “\$1,288.”

Jennifer Everling,

Acting Clerk of the Board.

[FR Doc. 2023–01287 Filed 1–23–23; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2022–1305; Project Identifier AD–2022–00913–T; Amendment 39–22309; AD 2023–02–02]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation (Gulfstream) Model GV and GV–SP airplanes. This AD was prompted by the omission of a life limit in the airworthiness limitations section (ALS) of the maintenance manual for a certain main landing gear (MLG) trunnion pin. This AD requires revising the ALS of the existing instructions for continued airworthiness (ICA) or inspection program for the airplane to establish a life limit for the affected MLG trunnion pin. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective February 28, 2023.

ADDRESSES:

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA–2022–1305; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, any comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations is 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:

Miral Patel, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Section, FAA, Atlanta ACO Branch, 1701 Columbia Avenue, College Park, GA 30337; phone: 404–474–5590; email: *9-ASO-ATLACO-ADs@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

ESTIMATED COSTS

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost/airplane	Cost on U.S. operators
Revise ALS	1 work-hour × \$85 = \$85	N/A	\$85	\$49,470

Background

The FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all Gulfstream Model GV and GV–SP airplanes. The NPRM published in the **Federal Register** on October 27, 2022 (87 FR 65018). The NPRM was prompted by a report indicating a life limit for replacing MLG trunnion pin part number (P/N) 1159SCL566–17 had been omitted from the ALS of the maintenance manual for Model GV and GV–SP airplanes. Gulfstream revised the ALS for the applicable airplanes to establish a life limit of 20,000 flight cycles for the affected MLG trunnion pin. A trunnion pin remaining in service beyond its life limit could lead to fracture and failure of the trunnion pin. This condition, if not addressed, could result in MLG failure and could lead to a runway excursion.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA received no comments on the NPRM or on the determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

The FAA reviewed the relevant data and determined that air safety requires adopting this AD as proposed. Accordingly, the FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products. Except for minor editorial changes, this AD is adopted as proposed in the NPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator.

Other Related Service Information

The FAA reviewed Gulfstream GV Aircraft Maintenance Manual, Revision 55, dated March 15, 2022; Gulfstream G550 Aircraft Maintenance Manual, Revision 36, dated March 15, 2022; and Gulfstream G500–5000 Aircraft Maintenance Manual, Revision 36, dated March 15, 2022. The service information adds a life limit for MLG trunnion pin P/N 1159SCL566–17.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 582 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD: