

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:

##### British Aerospace Regional Aircraft

[Formerly Jetstream Aircraft Limited; British Aerospace (Commercial Aircraft) Limited]: Docket 98-NM-53-AD.

**Applicability:** BAe Model ATP airplanes, constructor's numbers 2002 through 2067 inclusive; 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 detect and correct cracking of the splined operating shaft of the internal door handle on the forward passenger door, rear passenger door, and rear baggage door, which could result in failure of the internal door handle, inability to operate the door during an emergency evacuation, and consequent injury to airplane occupants; accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 2,000 flight cycles on the splined operating shaft of the internal door handle on the forward passenger door, rear passenger door, and rear baggage door; or within 60 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later; accomplish either paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD.

(1) Perform a magnetic particle inspection to detect cracking of the splined operating shaft of the internal door handle on the forward passenger door, rear passenger door, and rear baggage door, in accordance with British Aerospace Regional Aircraft BAe ATP Alert Service Bulletin ATP-A52-30, dated March 19, 1997.

(i) If any crack is found, prior to further flight, accomplish the actions required by paragraph (a)(2).

(ii) If no crack is found, repeat the actions required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 1,000 flight cycles.

(2) Replace the existing splined operating shaft with a new splined operating shaft, in accordance with the alert service bulletin. Repeat the actions required by paragraph (a) of this AD within 2,000 flight cycles after the replacement, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 1,000 flight cycles.

(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, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their request through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116.

**Note 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

(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.

**Note 3:** The subject of this AD is addressed in British airworthiness directive 004-03-97 (undated).

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 3, 1998.

**Darrell M. Pederson,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-9341 Filed 4-8-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

#### DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

#### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-326-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747 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 747 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive detailed visual inspections for corrosion, and repetitive high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections for cracks, of the upper link assembly on the number 2 and number 3 engine struts, and corrective actions, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by reports of corrosion and cracks located at the four fasteners that attach to the aft end to the upper link assembly on the number 2 and number 3 engine struts. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the upper link due to cracking or corrosion, subsequent damage to other strut support structure, and in-flight separation of an engine from the airplane.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by May 26, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-326-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:** Tamara L. Dow, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2771; 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 97-NM-326-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

#### Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-326-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

#### Discussion

The FAA has received reports indicating that nine operators have found seven instances of corrosion and three instances of cracks on 10 airplanes that had accumulated between 7,400 and 19,800 flight cycles and between 37,100 and 81,600 flight hours. One operator reported a 1-inch crack from one fastener hole location at the aft end of the upper link of the strut to the part edge. The corrosion and cracks were located at the four fasteners which attach the aft end of the upper link assembly of the number 2 and number 3 engine struts. Such corrosion and cracking, in the struts upper link, at the aft end attachment for the number 2 and 3 engine struts, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could result in failure of the upper link, subsequent damage to other strut support structure, and in-flight separation of an engine from the airplane.

#### Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2187, dated May 22, 1997, which describes procedures for repetitive detailed visual inspections for corrosion, and high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections for cracks, on the upper link assembly on the number 2 and number 3 engine struts, and corrective actions, if necessary. The corrective actions include repair or

replacement of the upper link in accordance with Parts 2 and 3 of the Accomplishment Instructions of the alert service bulletin. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the alert service bulletin are 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 described previously, except as described below.

#### Differences Between Proposed Rule and Alert Service Bulletin

The alert service bulletin specifies that certain corrective actions required by this proposed AD may be accomplished in accordance with an operator's "equivalent procedure." However, the alert service bulletin also specifies that operators may accomplish those actions in accordance with certain chapters of the Airplane Maintenance Manual. This proposed AD would require that any such actions be accomplished only in accordance with the procedures specified in the Airplane Maintenance Manual. An "operator's equivalent procedure" may be used only if approved as an alternative method of compliance in accordance with the provisions of this proposed AD.

#### Cost Impact

There are approximately 567 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 173 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 12 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspections, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$124,560, or \$720 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 97-NM-326-AD.

**Applicability:** Model 747 series airplanes, line positions 1 through 886 inclusive; equipped with Pratt & Whitney JT9D-3 or -7, or General Electric CF6-45 or -50 engine struts; 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 (e) 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 failure of the upper link due to cracking or corrosion, subsequent damage to other strut support structure, and in-flight separation of an engine from the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Perform a detailed visual inspection for corrosion, and a high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection for cracks, of the upper link assembly on the number 2 and number 3 engine struts, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2187, dated May 22, 1997, at the applicable time specified in either paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD.

(1) For airplanes with upper link assemblies that were overhauled in accordance with Overhaul Manual, 54-00-01, and on which the four aft end attach bolts were installed with sealant: Perform the inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD, at the later of the times specified in paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (a)(1)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Within 6,000 flight cycles or 8 years after the date of overhaul of the upper link assembly, whichever occurs first.

(ii) Within 600 flight cycles or 6 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first.

(2) For airplanes other than those identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this AD: Perform the inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD, at the later of the times specified in paragraphs (a)(2)(i) and (a)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Within 6,000 total flight cycles, or 8 years after the date of manufacture of the airplane, whichever occurs first.

(ii) Within 600 flight cycles, or 6 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first.

(b) If no crack or corrosion is detected during any inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, repeat the inspections specified in paragraph (a) of this AD, thereafter, at intervals not to exceed 18 months.

(c) If any crack or corrosion is detected during any inspection required by this AD, prior to further flight, accomplish either paragraph (c)(1) or (c)(2) of this AD, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2187, dated May 22, 1997. Thereafter, repeat the inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD, at intervals not to exceed 6,000 flight cycles or 8 years, whichever occurs first.

(1) Repair the upper link within the limits specified in the alert service bulletin, in accordance with Part 2 of the Accomplishment Instructions of the alert service bulletin. (Complete corrosion and crack removal must be achieved within the limits specified in the alert service bulletin.) Or

(2) Replace the upper link with a new upper link assembly, in accordance with Part 3 of the Accomplishment Instructions of the alert service bulletin.

**Note 2:** If any cracking or corrosion is found, and Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2187, dated May 22, 1997, specifies that corrective actions may be accomplished

in accordance with an operator's "equivalent procedure." The actions must be accomplished in accordance with the chapter of the Boeing 747 Airplane Maintenance Manual (AMM) specified in the alert service bulletin.

(d) Accomplishment of the modifications required in AD 95-13-07, amendment 39-9287 (for General Electric CF6-45 or -50 engine struts); or AD 95-10-16, amendment 39-9233 (for Pratt & Whitney JT9D-3 or -7 engine struts); constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

(e) 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 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Seattle ACO.

(f) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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 April 3, 1998.

**S.R. Miller,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
[FR Doc. 98-9337 Filed 4-8-98; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-U**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-71-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. Model YS-11 and YS-11A 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 all Mitsubishi Model YS-11 and YS-11A series airplanes. This proposal would require revising the airplane flight manual (AFM) to prohibit positioning the power levers below the flight idle stop. This proposal is a result of incidents and accidents involving airplanes equipped with turboprop engines in which the propeller beta was

used improperly during flight. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent loss of airplane controllability or engine overspeed with consequent loss of engine power caused by the power levers being positioned below the flight idle stop while the airplane is in flight.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by May 26, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-71-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.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mark Quam, Aerospace Engineer, Standardization Branch, ANM-113; FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2145; fax (425) 227-1149.

#### 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 97-NM-71-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.