

benefits program requiring periodic deductions from pay, if the amount to be recovered was accumulated over 4 pay periods or less;

(2) A routine intra-agency adjustment of pay that is made to correct an overpayment of pay attributable to clerical or administrative errors or delays in processing pay documents, if the overpayment occurred within the 4 pay periods preceding the adjustment and, at the time of such adjustment, or as soon thereafter as practical, the individual is provided written notice of the nature and the amount of the adjustment and point of contact for such adjustment; or

(3) Any adjustment to collect a debt amounting to \$50 or less, if, at the time of such adjustment, or as soon thereafter as practical, the individual is provided written notice of the nature and the amount of the adjustment and a point of contact for contesting such adjustment.

(d) * * *

(3) The frequency and amount of the intended deduction (stated as a fixed dollar amount or as a percentage of pay, not to exceed 15 percent of disposable pay) and the intention to continue the deductions until the debt is paid in full or otherwise resolved;

* * * * *

§ 550.1106 [Amended]

5. Section 550.1106 is amended by removing "4 CFR 102.3(b)(3)" and adding "the FCCS as defined in § 550.1103" in its place.

§ 550.1107 Obtaining the services of a hearing official.

6. Section 550.1107 is amended, in paragraph (a), by removing "4 CFR 102.1" and adding "the FCCS as defined in § 550.1103" in its place; in paragraph (b), by removing "4 CFR 102.1" and adding "the FCCS" in its place; and by adding a new paragraph (c) to read as follows:

* * * * *

(c) The determination of a hearing official designated under this section is considered to be an official certification regarding the existence and amount of the debt for purposes of executing salary offset under 5 U.S.C. 5514. A creditor agency may make a certification to the Secretary of the Treasury under § 550.1108 or a paying agency under § 550.1109 regarding the existence and amount of the debt based on the certification of a hearing official. If a hearing official determines that a debt may not be collected via salary offset, but the creditor agency finds that the debt is still valid, the creditor agency may still seek collection of the debt

through other means, such as offset of other Federal payments, litigation, etc.

7. Section 550.1108 is redesignated as § 550.1109 and is amended by removing the "(b)" after "5514" in paragraph (a)(3), adding "claim" after the first appearance of "debt" in paragraph (b)(2), removing "creditor agency's" in paragraph (b)(3), and adding introductory text at the beginning of the section; and a new § 550.1108 is added to read as follows:

§ 550.1108 Requesting recovery through centralized administrative offset.

Under 31 U.S.C. 3716, creditor agencies must notify the Secretary of the Treasury of all debts over 180 days delinquent (as defined in the FCCS, see § 550.1103) so that recovery may be made by centralized administrative offset. This includes those debts the agency seeks to recover from the pay account of an employee of another agency via salary offset. The Secretary of the Treasury and other Federal disbursing officials will match payments, including Federal salary payments, against these debts. Where a match occurs, and all the requirements for offset have been met, the payment will be offset to satisfy the debt in whole or part. Prior to offset of the pay account of an employee, an agency must comply with the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 5514, this subpart, and agency regulations issued thereunder. Specific procedures for notifying the Secretary of the Treasury of debt for purposes of collection by centralized administrative offset are contained in 31 CFR part 285 and the FCCS. At their discretion, creditor agencies may notify the Secretary of the Treasury of debts that have been delinquent for 180 days or less, including debts the agency seeks to recover from the pay account of an employee via salary offset.

§ 550.1109 Requesting recovery from the paying agency.

When possible, salary offset through the centralized administrative offset procedures in § 550.1108 should be attempted before applying the procedures in this section.

* * * * *

8. A new section § 550.1110 is added to read as follows:

§ 550.1110 Debt collection centers.

A debt collection center may act in behalf of a creditor agency to collect claims via salary offset consistent with this section, subject to any limitations on its authority established by the creditor agency it represents or by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

(a) A debt collection center may be authorized to enter into a written agreement with the indebted employee regarding the repayment schedule or, in the absence of such agreement, to establish the terms of the repayment schedule.

(b) A debt collection center may make certifications to the Secretary of the Treasury under § 550.1108 or to a paying agency under § 550.1109 based on the certifications it has received from the creditor agency or a hearing official.

(c) A debt collection center responsible for collecting a particular debt may not act in behalf of a creditor agency for the purpose of making determinations regarding the existence or amount of that debt.

(d) A debt collection center responsible for collecting a particular debt may arrange for a hearing on the existence or amount of the debt or the repayment schedule by an administrative law judge or, alternatively, another hearing official not under the supervision or control of the head of the creditor agency or the debt collection center.

[FR Doc. 98-9972 Filed 4-15-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-87-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; British Aerospace Model BAe 146-200A 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 British Aerospace Model BAe 146-200A series airplanes. This proposal would require a one-time inspection of the gust damper of the elevator control system to determine if the gust damper is properly charged, and of the horizontal stabilizer to detect cracking of elevator hinge rib 1; and corrective action, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by the issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect and correct cracking

of elevator hinge rib 1 of the horizontal stabilizer, which could occur if the gust damper of the elevator control system discharges and allows the elevator to move freely in ground gust conditions. Such cracking could result in damage to the structural attachment of the elevator to the horizontal stabilizer, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 18, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-87-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 AI(R) American Support, Inc., 13850 Mclearen Road, Herndon, Virginia 20171. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Norman B. Martenson, Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2110; 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 98-NM-87-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-87-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain British Aerospace Model BAe 146-200A series airplanes. The elevator control system on this model incorporates a gust damper, which, when properly pressurized with hydraulic fluid, prevents free movement of the elevators in ground wind gusts. The CAA advises that two airplanes, which had been stored in the desert for an extended period of time, were each found to have a cracked or broken elevator hinge rib 1. Investigation revealed that the gust damper of the elevator control system on the airplanes was discharged, which may have been caused by deterioration of the gust damper seals due to the desert heat. The discharged gust damper of the elevator control system allowed the elevators on the airplanes to move freely in ground wind gusts, which resulted in high impact loads on the elevator hinge rib 1 stops, and consequent cracking of elevator hinge rib 1 on these airplanes. Such cracking, if not corrected, could result in damage to the structural attachment of the elevator to the horizontal stabilizer, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

British Aerospace has issued Service Bulletin SB.55-16, dated July 14, 1997, which describes procedures for performing a one-time visual inspection of the gust damper of the elevator control system to determine whether the gust damper is properly charged, and recharging any gust damper that is found to be improperly charged. This service bulletin also describes procedures for performing a one-time detailed visual inspection of the horizontal stabilizer, using a borescope, to detect cracking of elevator hinge rib

1. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The CAA classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued British airworthiness directive 010-07-97, dated March 2, 1998, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in the United Kingdom.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in the United Kingdom 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 CAA has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the CAA, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed in the following paragraph.

Differences Between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletin

Operators should note that, although the service bulletin specifies that the manufacturer should be contacted for repair instructions if any cracking is found in elevator hinge rib 1, this proposal would require that discrepant parts be replaced with new or serviceable parts prior to further flight, in accordance with replacement instructions provided by the manufacturer and approved by the CAA.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 19 British Aerospace Model BAe 146-200A series 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 inspections, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$1,140, 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:

British Aerospace Regional Aircraft

(Formerly British Aerospace Regional Aircraft Limited, Avro International Aerospace Division; British Aerospace, PLC; British Aerospace Commercial Aircraft Limited): Docket 98–NM–87–AD.

Applicability: Model BAe 146–200A series airplanes, as listed in British Aerospace Service Bulletin SB.55–16, dated July 14, 1997; 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 elevator hinge rib 1 of the horizontal stabilizer, which could result in damage to the structural attachment of the elevator to the horizontal stabilizer and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane; accomplish the following:

(a) Within 60 days after the effective date of this AD, accomplish paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this AD, in accordance with British Aerospace Service Bulletin SB.55–16, dated July 14, 1997.

(1) Perform a visual inspection of the gust damper of the elevator control system to determine if the gust damper is properly charged. If any gust damper is found to be improperly charged, prior to further flight, recharge the gust damper in accordance with the service bulletin.

(2) Perform a detailed visual inspection, using a borescope, to detect cracking of elevator hinge rib 1, on the left and right side of the airplane, in accordance with the service bulletin. If any cracking is found, prior to further flight, replace any cracked hinge rib 1 with a new or serviceable part, in accordance with a method approved by either the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate; or procedures provided by the manufacturer that are approved by the Civil Aviation Authority, which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom.

(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 requests 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 010–07–97, dated March 2, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 9, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–10055 Filed 4–15–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 50

[FRL–5998–4]

Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Initial call for information.

SUMMARY: The National Center for Environmental Assessment, of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is undertaking to review and, as appropriate, revise the EPA criteria document entitled Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter (PM) as required under sections 108 and 109 of the Clean Air Act. The process that the EPA plans to follow is described in a previous notice (62 FR 55201, October 23, 1997).

Since completion of the 1996 criteria document for particulate matter, the EPA has continued to follow the scientific literature and compile information that may be relevant to the next periodic review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for PM (PM NAAQS). Interested parties are invited to assist the EPA in developing and refining its scientific information base to help ensure that all relevant information is considered in updating the PM criteria document. In particular, new information is being sought with regard to the following three general topic areas: (1) PM health effects, including experimental studies of PM exposure effects on humans or