Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99–NM–57–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 757–200 and –200PF 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 757–200 and –200PF series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive detailed visual inspections to detect loose fuse pins in the outboard beam attachment and forward trunnion support on the main landing gear (MLG) and to detect corrosion on the structure adjacent to the fuse pin; and corrective actions, if necessary. This proposal also would require eventual replacement of the fuse pins with new corrosion resistant steel (CRES) fuse pins, which would constitute terminating action for the repetitive inspections. This proposal is prompted by a report of damaged fuse pins caused by corrosion. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent corroded fuse pins, which could result in the MLG separating from the wing, and consequent damage to the airplane and possible rupture of the wing fuel tank.

DATES: Comments must be received by November 22, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99–NM–57–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: Rick Kawaguchi, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–1153; 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 99–NM–57–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. 99–NM–57–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received a report indicating that, during heavy maintenance of several Boeing Model 757–200 series airplanes, 28 fuse pins were found damaged due to corrosion. Fuse pins made from 4330M and 4340 alloy with cracks in the chrome plating can be damaged by corrosion. Such corrosion or cracking, if not corrected, could result in the main landing gear (MLG) separating from the wing, and consequent damage to the airplane and possible rupture of the wing fuel tank.

The subject fuse pins on Boeing Model 757–200PF series airplanes are identical to those on the affected Boeing Model 757–200 series airplanes. Therefore, both of these airplanes may be subjected to the same unsafe condition.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757–57A0054, dated November 5, 1998, which describes procedures for repetitive detailed visual inspections to detect loose fuse pins in the outboard beam attachment and forward trunnion support on the MLG and corrosion on the structure adjacent to the fuse pin; and corrective actions, if necessary. The corrective actions involve performing a detailed visual inspection to detect corrosion on the fuse pin's mating parts, and repairing the parts, if necessary; performing a detailed visual inspection to detect cracks on the outer surface of the fuse pin chrome plating; and replacing the alloy steel fuse pins with new corrosion resistant steel (CRES) fuse pins, which would eliminate the need for the repetitive inspections. The service bulletin also describes procedures for a terminating action for the repetitive inspections. Accomplishment of the action specified in the service bulletin 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 service bulletin described previously.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 805 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 350 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 inspection, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $21,000, or $60 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

It would take approximately 440 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed replacement, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. The manufacturer has committed previously to its customers that it will bear the cost of replacement parts. As a result, the cost of those parts are not attributable to this proposed AD. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $9,240,000, or $26,400 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are 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 99–NM–57–AD.

Applicability: Model 757–200 and –200PF series airplanes, line numbers 1 through 806 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 (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 as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent corroded fuse pins, which could result in the main landing gear (MLG) separating from the wing, and consequent damage to the airplane and possible rupture of the wing fuel tank, accomplish the following:

Repetitive Inspections

(a) Perform a detailed visual inspection to detect loose fuse pins in the outboard beam attachment and forward trunnion support on the MLG and to detect corrosion on the structure adjacent to the fuse pin, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757–57A0054, dated November 5, 1998; at the later of the times specified in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this AD. Thereafter, repeat the inspection at intervals not to exceed 3,000 flight cycles or 24 months, whichever occurs first, until accomplishment of paragraph (c) of this AD.

(1) Prior to 4 years since date of manufacture of the airplane; or

(2) Within 3,000 flight cycles or 24 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first.

Note 2: For the purposes of this AD, a detailed visual inspection is defined as: ''An intensive visual examination of a specific structural area, system, installation, or assembly to detect damage, failure, or irregularity. Available lighting is normally supplemented with a direct source of good lighting at intensity deemed appropriate by the inspector. Inspection aids such as mirror, magnifying lenses, etc., may be used. Surface cleaning and elaborate access procedures may be required.''

Corrective Action

(b) If any loose fuse pin or corrosion on the structure adjacent to the fuse pin is detected during any inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, prior to further flight, perform the applicable corrective action [i.e., detailed visual inspections for cracks or corrosion, repair of discrepant parts, and replacement of fuse pin] in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757–57A0054, dated November 5, 1998. Replacement of an alloy steel fuse pin with a new corrosion resistant steel (CRES) fuse pin constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of paragraph (a) of this AD for that fuse pin only.

Terminating Action

(c) At the next scheduled MLG overhaul, or within 12 years after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs first, replace all alloy steel fuse pins with new CRES fuse pins in the outboard beam attachment and forward trunnion support on the MLG in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757–57A0054, dated November 5, 1998. Accomplishment of the action specified in this paragraph constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of this AD.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(d) 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.

Special Flight Permits

(e) 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 September 29, 1999.

D.L. Riggin,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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