

limited to these issues, and the FAA invites comments on any other aspect of occupational safety and health on aircraft in operation.

(1) Are there specific crewmember occupational safety and health concerns? If so, what are they?

(2) What recordkeeping data is available that documents injuries and illnesses related to crewmember and other employee occupational safety and health concerns? Should recordkeeping be standardized?

(3) How are aviation employees other than crewmembers (such as ground service employees and maintenance workers) currently protected by FAA regulations, and should the working conditions of these employees be included in possible future rulemaking? Should the FAA modify its rules about maintenance manuals?

(4) Describe how occupational safety and health hazards vary when the aircraft is airborne versus when it is on the ground.

(5) Are there any safety issues related to operations on airport ramp areas that the FAA should address?

(6) In the development of its own occupational safety and health standards, what, if any, OSHA standards should the FAA use as the basis for future FAA standards?

(7) What procedures should be established to identify and remedy issues not addressed by OSHA regulations?

(8) Are any air carriers currently supporting occupational safety and health programs for their employees? If so, what do the programs include?

(9) What are the potential impact and implementation problems associated with the FAA developing occupational safety and health standards to protect airline employee safety and health?

Input is encouraged from government agencies such as OSHA, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institutes for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and from advisory groups such as the American Industrial Hygiene Association and the American Society for Safety Engineers.

#### Participation at the Meeting

Requests from persons who wish to present oral statements at the meeting should be received by the FAA no later than November 22, 1999. Such requests should be submitted to Cindy Nordlie, as listed above in the section titled **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** and should include a written summary of oral remarks to be presented and an estimate of time needed for the presentation. The FAA will prepare an

agenda of speakers that will be available at the meeting. The names of those individuals whose requests to present oral statements are received after the date specified above may not appear on the written agenda. To accommodate as many speakers as possible, the amount of time allocated to each speaker may be less than the amount of time requested. Persons requiring audiovisual equipment should notify the FAA when requesting to be placed on the agenda.

#### Public Meeting Procedures

The FAA will use the following procedures to facilitate the meeting:

(1) There will be no admission fee or other charge to attend or to participate in the meeting. The meeting will be open to all persons who are scheduled to present statements or who register between 8:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. on the day of the meeting. While the FAA will make every effort to accommodate all persons wishing to participate, admission will be subject to availability of space in the meeting room. The meeting may adjourn early if scheduled speakers complete their statements in less time than is scheduled for the meeting.

(2) An individual, whether speaking in a personal or a representative capacity on behalf of an organization, may be limited to a 10-minute statement. If possible, we will notify the speaker if additional time is available.

(3) The FAA will try to accommodate all speakers. If the available time does not permit this, speakers generally will be scheduled on a first-come-first-served basis. However, the FAA reserves the right to exclude some speakers if necessary to present a balance of viewpoints and issues.

(4) Sign and oral interpretation can be made available at the meeting, as well as an assistive listening device, if requested 10 calendar days before the meeting.

(5) Representatives of the FAA will preside over the meeting. A panel of FAA personnel involved in this issue will be present.

(6) The meeting will be recorded by a court reporter. A transcript of the meeting and any material accepted by the FAA representatives during the meeting will be included in the public docket. Any person who is interested in purchasing a copy of the transcript should contact the court reporter directly. Additional transcript purchase information will be available at the meeting.

(7) The FAA will review and consider all material presented by participants at the meeting. Position papers or material presenting views or arguments related to

the occupational safety and health of crewmembers may be accepted at the discretion of the presiding officer and subsequently placed in the public docket. The FAA requests that persons participating in the meeting provide six copies of all materials to be presented for distribution to the FAA representatives; other copies may be provided to the audience at the discretion of the participant.

(8) Statements made by FAA representatives are intended to facilitate discussion of the issues or to clarify issues. Any statement made during the meeting by an FAA representative is not intended to be, and should not be construed as, a position of the FAA.

(9) The meeting is designed to solicit public views and gather additional information on the occupational safety and health of crewmembers and other issues discussed in this notice. Therefore, the meeting will be conducted in an informal and non-adversarial manner. No individual will be subject to cross-examination by any other participant; however, FAA representatives may ask questions to clarify a statement and to ensure a complete and accurate record.

Issued in Washington, DC on October 4, 1999.

**Margaret Gilligan,**

*Deputy Associate Administrator for Regulation and Certification.*

[FR Doc. 99-27156 Filed 10-13-99; 4:52 pm]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99-NM-208-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747-400 and 767-200 and -300 Series Airplanes Powered by Pratt & Whitney Model PW4000 Series Engines**

**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 747-400 and 767-200 and -300 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections to detect damage and wear of the auxiliary track assembly of the thrust reverser, and corrective actions, if necessary. This proposal would also

require eventual replacement of the liner and slider, or the entire assembly, with new, improved parts, which, when accomplished, would terminate the repetitive inspections. This proposal is prompted by reports of damage and wear to the auxiliary track assembly. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent a slider disengaging from the auxiliary track assembly, which could lead to separation of a portion of the thrust reverser from the airplane during flight, possible impact of separated portions on airplane structure, and consequent possible rapid decompression of the airplane, reduced controllability of the airplane, or reduced structural integrity of the fuselage.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by December 3, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99-NM-208-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9 a.m. and 3 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:** Sulmo Mariano, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM-140S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2686; 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-208-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-208-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

##### **Discussion**

The FAA has received reports indicating that damage and wear was found on the upper and lower auxiliary track assemblies of the thrust reverser halves on Boeing Model 747 and 767 series airplanes equipped with Pratt & Whitney Model PW4000 series engines. Further investigation revealed that the damage and wear is caused by loss of the Rulon J tape on the slider of the auxiliary track assembly. This condition, if not corrected, could result in a slider disengaging from the auxiliary track assembly, which could lead to separation of a portion of the thrust reverser from the airplane during flight, possible impact of separated portions on airplane structure, and consequent possible rapid decompression of the airplane, reduced controllability of the airplane, or reduced structural integrity of the fuselage.

##### **Explanation of Relevant Service Information**

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Service Bulletin 747-78A2164, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 747-400 series airplanes), and Boeing Service Bulletin 767-78A0079, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 767-200 and -300 series airplanes). These service bulletins describe procedures for repetitive inspections of the auxiliary track assembly of the thrust reverser to detect missing segments of the track lip; to detect signs that the slider has disengaged from the track; to detect cracks, gouges, and wear of the liner;

and to measure the auxiliary track liner gap. The service bulletins also describe procedures for temporary repairs and repetitive inspections of those repairs, if necessary. The service bulletins describe procedures for replacement of the liner and slider with a new, improved liner and slider, installation of a retainer bar, and replacement of the auxiliary track assembly with a new, improved assembly. Such modifications eliminate the need for repetitive inspections. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the applicable 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 applicable service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

##### **Differences Between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletins**

Operators should note that this proposed AD would mandate, at various compliance times depending on the findings during the repetitive inspections, the replacement of the liner and slider, or the entire auxiliary track assembly, with new, improved parts. Such replacement is described in the service bulletins as optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections.

The FAA has determined that long-term continued operational safety will be better assured by design changes to remove the source of the problem, rather than by repetitive inspections. Long-term inspections may not be providing the degree of safety assurance necessary for the transport airplane fleet. This, coupled with a better understanding of the human factors associated with numerous continual inspections, has led the FAA to consider placing less emphasis on inspections and more emphasis on design improvements. The proposed replacement requirement is consistent with these conditions.

The service bulletins describe, for certain damage or wear detected on the auxiliary track assembly, replacement of the liner and slider with a new, improved liner and slider, installation of a retainer bar, and a one-time inspection of the repair as a permanent repair. The service bulletins state that such actions would eliminate the need for the repetitive inspections. The proposed AD would only allow this repair as a temporary repair and would

require eventual replacement of the repaired auxiliary track assembly with a new, improved assembly. The FAA has determined that this repair would not prevent excessive damage and wear in the future because the cause of that damage and wear is related to how the parts mate during installation, and, therefore, such repair would not prevent the subject unsafe condition.

### Cost Impact

There are approximately 254 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 12 Model 747-400 series airplanes and 46 Model 767-200 and -300 series airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

It would take approximately 4 work hours per engine to accomplish the proposed repetitive inspection, 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 of Model 747-400 series airplanes (4 engines per airplane) is estimated to be \$11,520, or \$960 per airplane, per inspection cycle. The cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators of Model 767 series airplanes (2 engines per airplane) is estimated to be \$22,080, or \$480 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Should an operator be required to accomplish the replacement of the auxiliary track assembly, it would take approximately 220 work hours per auxiliary track assembly to accomplish the proposed replacement, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$30,090. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this replacement is estimated to be \$43,290 per assembly. There are four auxiliary track assemblies per engine.

Should an operator be required to accomplish the replacement of the liner and slider, it would take approximately 8 work hours per auxiliary track assembly to accomplish the proposed replacement, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided at no cost by the airplane manufacturer. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this replacement is estimated to be \$480 per assembly. There are four auxiliary track assemblies per engine.

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-208-AD.

**Applicability:** Model 747-400 series airplanes powered by Pratt & Whitney PW4000 series engines, line numbers 696 through 1100 inclusive; and Model 767-200 and -300 series airplanes powered by Pratt & Whitney PW4000 series engines, line numbers 1 through 646 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 a slider disengaging from the auxiliary track assembly, which could lead to separation of a portion of the thrust reverser from the airplane during flight, possible impact of separated portions on airplane structure, and consequent possible rapid decompression of the airplane, reduced controllability of the airplane, or reduced structural integrity of the fuselage, accomplish the following:

### Initial Inspection

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 3,000 total flight cycles, or within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform a detailed visual inspection of the upper and lower auxiliary track assemblies on each thrust reverser half of each engine to detect missing segments of the track lip; to detect signs that the slider has disengaged from the track; to detect cracks, gouges, and wear of the liner; and to measure the auxiliary track liner gap; in accordance with Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Service Bulletin 747-78A2164, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 747-400 series airplanes); or Boeing Service Bulletin 767-78A0079, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 767 series airplanes); as applicable.

**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."

### Repetitive Inspections/Corrective Actions

(1) If no discrepancy is detected, repeat the detailed visual inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 flight cycles or 7,000 flight hours, whichever occurs earlier, until paragraph (b) or (c), as applicable, has been accomplished.

(2) If the auxiliary track lip has a missing segment of 3 inches or longer, or longitudinal cracks at the base of the lip, or other indications that the slider has disengaged from the track in the forward 4 inches, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of the applicable service bulletin. Repeat the detailed visual inspection thereafter at the applicable intervals specified in Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of the applicable service bulletin, until paragraph (c) of this AD has been accomplished.

(3) If the auxiliary track lip has a missing segment of 3 inches or longer, or longitudinal cracks at the base of the lip, or other indications that the slider has disengaged from the track AFT of the forward four inches, accomplish paragraphs (a)(3)(i) or (a)(3)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Prior to further flight, repair in accordance with Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of the applicable service bulletin. Repeat the detailed visual inspection thereafter at the applicable intervals specified in Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of the applicable service bulletin, until paragraph (c) of this AD has been accomplished.

(ii) Accomplish both paragraphs (a)(3)(i)(A) and (a)(3)(ii)(B) of this AD:

(A) Prior to further flight, deactivate the associated thrust reverser in accordance with Section 78-2 of Boeing Document D6U10151, "Boeing 747-400 Dispatch Deviations Guide," Revision 11, dated March 31, 1998 (for Model 747-400 series airplanes); or Section 78-2 of Boeing Document D630T002, "Boeing 767 Dispatch Deviations Guide," Revision 19, dated May 14, 1999 (for Model 767 series airplanes); as applicable. No more than one thrust reverser on any airplane may be deactivated under the provisions of the paragraph.

**Note 3:** The airplane may be operated for up to 30 days in accordance with the provisions and limitations specified in the operator's FAA-approved Master Minimum Equipment List, provided that no more than one thrust reverser on the airplane is inoperative.

(B) Within 30 days after deactivation of any thrust reverser in accordance with paragraph (a)(3)(ii)(A) of this AD, the thrust reverser must be repaired in accordance with Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of the applicable service bulletin; once this is accomplished, the thrust reverser may then be reactivated. Repeat the detailed visual inspection thereafter at the applicable intervals specified in Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of the applicable service bulletin, until paragraph (c) of this AD has been accomplished.

#### Terminating Action

(b) For any auxiliary track assembly on which no discrepancy is detected during any detailed visual inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD: Replace the liner and slider of the auxiliary track assembly with a new, improved liner and slider, in accordance with Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Service Bulletin 747-78A2164, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 747-400 series airplanes); or Boeing Service Bulletin 767-78A0079, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 767 series airplanes); as applicable; at the later of the times specified in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this AD. Such action constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD for that assembly.

(1) Within 6,000 flight cycles, 14,000 flight hours, or 5 years after the date of the first inspection, whichever occurs earliest; or

(2) Within 4 years after the effective date of this AD.

(c) For any auxiliary track assembly on which any discrepancy is detected during any detailed visual inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD: Replace the auxiliary track assembly with a new, improved assembly (including a new liner and slider), in accordance with Part A of the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Service Bulletin 747-78A2164, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 747-400 series airplanes); or Boeing Service Bulletin 767-78A0079, Revision 2, dated December 3, 1998 (for Model 767 series airplanes); as applicable; at the later of the times specified in paragraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this AD. Such action constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD for that assembly.

(1) Within 4,500 flight cycles, 10,000 flight hours, or 3 years after the date of the first repair, whichever occurs earliest; or

(2) Within 2 years after the effective date 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 4:** 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 October 13, 1999.

**D.L. Riggins,**

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

[FR Doc. 99-27273 Filed 10-18-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-U**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-354-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 757 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 series airplanes. This proposal would require replacement of transmission assemblies for the trailing edge flaps with modified transmission assemblies. This proposal is prompted by reports of broken bolts that attach the transmission assemblies for the trailing edge flaps. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent damage to the flap system, adjacent system, or structural components; and excessive skew of the trailing edge flap; which could result in reduced controllability of the airplane.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by December 3, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-354-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:** Robert C. Jones, 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) 227-1118; 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