

**Modification**

(a) Within three years after the effective date of this AD, modify the forward and aft emergency evacuation slides by replacing the Velcro restraints for the support logs with frangible link restraints, in accordance with Airbus Service Bulletin A320-25-1215, dated April 29, 1999.

**Note 2:** Airbus Service Bulletin A320-25-1215 refers to Air Cruisers Service Bulletin S.B. 004-25-51, dated February 26, 1999, as an additional source of service information for accomplishment of the modification.

(b) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install on any airplane an emergency evacuation slide, P/N D31516-103, D31516-105, D31516-107, D31516-109, D31517-103, D31517-105, D31517-107, or D31517-109.

**Alternative Methods of Compliance**

(c) 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 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM-116.

**Special Flight Permits**

(d) 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 4:** The subject of this AD is addressed in French airworthiness directive 1999-356-136(B), dated September 8, 1999.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on December 1, 1999.

**D.L. Riffin,**

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

[FR Doc. 99-31678 Filed 12-6-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION****Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 99-NM-329-AD]

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model MD-90-30 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 McDonnell Douglas Model MD-90-30 series airplanes. This proposal would require replacement of certain ground block screws with new screws; and retermination of the circuit ground wires of the electrical power control unit (EPCU) to separate grounding points. This proposal is prompted by reports of complete loss of the primary electrical power on an airplane during flight. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent a loose electrical ground block of the circuit ground wires of the EPCU, which could result in complete loss of the primary electrical power of an airplane during flight.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by January 21, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99-NM-329-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 Aircraft Group, Long Beach Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Technical Publications Business Administration, Dept. C1-L51 (2-60). This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** George Mabuni, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130L, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5341; fax (562) 627-5210.

**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-329-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-329-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

**Discussion**

The FAA has received reports of complete loss of the primary electrical power [including auxiliary power unit (APU)] on a Model MD-90-30 series airplane during flight. The APU was started, but the APU generator would not power the electrical busses. This airplane also had an intermittent primary electrical power loss during landing and taxi. Investigation revealed an intermittent open circuit of the ground wires of the electrical power control unit (EPCU) due to a loose electrical ground block. This condition, if not corrected, could result in complete loss of the primary electrical power of the airplane during flight.

**Explanation of Relevant Service Information**

The FAA has reviewed and approved McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD90-24A060, Revision 01, dated September 2, 1999, which describes procedures for replacement of the electrical ground block screws with new screws. Accomplishment of the action specified in the service bulletin and the retermination described below

are intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

#### Explanation of FAA's Determination

The FAA has determined that, in addition to the replacement described above, it is necessary to reterminate the circuit ground wires of the EPCU to separate grounding points to ensure that a single point failure does not occur.

#### 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. The proposed AD also would require retermination of the circuit ground wires of the EPCU to separate grounding points to ensure that a single point failure does not occur. The retermination would be required to be accomplished in accordance with a method approved by the FAA.

#### Cost Impact

There are approximately 104 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 21 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the proposed replacement, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Parts would be procured from the operator's stock. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the replacement proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$1,260, or \$60 per airplane.

The FAA also estimates that it would take approximately 10 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed retermination of the circuit ground wires of the EPCU, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Parts would be procured from the operator's stock. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the retermination proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$12,600, or \$600 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:

**McDonnell Douglas:** Docket 99-NM-329-AD.

**Applicability:** Model MD-90-30 series airplanes, as listed in McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD90-24A060, Revision 01, dated September 2, 1999; certificated in any category.

**Note 1:** This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise 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 (c) 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 loose electrical ground block of the circuit ground wires of the electrical power control unit (EPCU), which could result in complete loss of the primary electrical power of an airplane during flight, accomplish the following:

#### Replacement

(a) Within 30 days after the effective of this AD, replace the electrical ground block screws with new screws in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD90-24A060, Revision 01, dated September 2, 1999.

**Note 2:** Accomplishment of the replacement of electrical ground block screws prior to the effective date of this AD in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD90-24A060, dated July 28, 1999, is acceptable for compliance with the requirements of paragraph (a) of this AD.

#### Modification of the Electrical Power Control Unit

(b) Within 12 months after the effective date of this AD, reterminate the circuit ground wires of the EPCU to separate grounding points to ensure that a single point failure does not occur, in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(c) 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, Los Angeles ACO. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

**Note 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles ACO.

#### Special Flight Permits

(d) 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 December 1, 1999.

**D. L. Riggins,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
[FR Doc. 99-31679 Filed 12-6-99; 8:45 am]

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