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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2010-0677; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-075-AD; Amendment 39-16578; AD 2011-02-05]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Model 727 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for the products listed above. This AD requires inspections for scribe lines in the fuselage skin at skin lap joints and butt joints, the skin at certain external approved repairs, the skin around external features such as antennas, and the skin at decals and fairings; and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. This AD was prompted by reports of scribe lines found at skin lap joints and butt joints, around external repairs and antennas, and at locations where external decals had been cut. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct scribe lines, which can develop into fatigue cracks in the skin and cause rapid decompression of the airplane.

DATES: This AD is effective March 1, 2011.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD as of March 1, 2011.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P.O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; e-mail me.boecom@boeing.com; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and

other information. The address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is Document Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 917-6577; fax (425) 917-6590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to the specified products. That NPRM published in the Federal Register on July 7, 2010 (75 FR 38950). That NPRM proposed to require inspections for scribe lines in the fuselage skin at skin lap joints and butt joints, the skin at certain external approved repairs, the skin around external features such as antennas, and the skin at decals and fairings; and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. The following presents the comments received on the proposal and the FAA's response to each comment.

Support for the NPRM

Boeing supports the intent of the NPRM.

Request To Revise Compliance Time

FedEx Express (FedEx) requested that we revise the compliance time in paragraph (g) of the NPRM to add an additional option of "at the next scheduled 'C' check (30 months) from the effective date of the AD." FedEx stated that it determined that the proposed inspection threshold and intervals would not fit within its planned scheduled maintenance checks, and the requested adjustment to the compliance time would allow FedEx to mitigate the need to schedule special visits to accomplish the inspections.

We disagree with the request to revise the compliance time. In developing an appropriate compliance time for this AD, we considered not only the safety implications, but the manufacturer's recommendations, the availability of required parts, and the practical aspect of accomplishing the modification within an interval of time that corresponds to typical scheduled maintenance for affected operators. Under the provisions of paragraph (m) of this AD, however, we might consider requests for adjustments to the compliance time if data are submitted to substantiate that such an adjustment would provide an acceptable level of safety. In addition, FedEx did not provide any technical justification for the request. We have not changed the final rule in regard to this issue.

Explanation of Change to This AD

We added a new paragraph (l) to this final rule to provide information on the federal Paperwork Reduction Act. We have reidentified subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD with the change described previously. We also determined that these changes will not increase the economic burden on any operator or increase the scope of the AD.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 234 airplanes of U.S. registry. The following table provides the estimated costs for U.S. operators to comply with this AD.

Table – Estimated costs

Action	Work hours	Average labor rate per hour	Parts	Cost per product	Number of U.S.-registered airplanes	Fleet cost
Inspection	Up to 320 hours	\$85	\$0	Up to \$27,200	234	Up to \$6,364,800

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in subtitle VII, part A, subpart III, section 44701: "General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

- (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) 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.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):



2011-02-05 The Boeing Company: Amendment 39-16578; Docket No. FAA-2010-0677; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-075-AD.

Effective Date

- (a) This AD is effective March 1, 2011.

Affected ADs

- (b) None.

Applicability

(c) This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 727, 727C, 727-100, 727-100C, 727-200, and 727-200F series airplanes, certificated in any category; as identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010.

Subject

- (d) Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53: Fuselage.

Unsafe Condition

(e) This AD results from reports of scribe lines found at skin lap joints, butt joints, around external repairs and external features such as antennas, and at locations where external decals had been cut. The Federal Aviation Administration is issuing this AD to detect and correct scribe lines, which can develop into fatigue cracks in the skin and cause rapid decompression of the airplane.

Compliance

(f) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

Inspection

(g) At the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., "Compliance," of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, except as provided in paragraphs (h) and (i) of this AD, do detailed inspections for scribe lines of skin lap joints, skin butt joints, around external approved repairs, external features, and fairings, and at locations where external decals may have been cut, and do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions at the times specified in the service bulletin, by accomplishing all actions specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, except as provided by paragraph (j) of this AD.

Note 1: The inspection exemptions noted in paragraph 1.E. of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, apply to this AD.

Exceptions to Service Bulletin Specifications

(h) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, specifies a compliance time after "the original issue date on this service bulletin," this AD requires compliance within the specified compliance time after the effective date of this AD.

(i) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, specifies to calculate the flight-cycle time for an airplane "as of the original issue date on this service bulletin," this AD requires the airplane flight-cycle time to be calculated as of the effective date of this AD.

(j) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, specifies to contact Boeing for appropriate action, accomplish applicable actions before further flight using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (m) of this AD.

Report

(k) At the applicable time specified in paragraph (k)(1) or (k)(2) of this AD: Submit a report of positive crack findings of the inspections required by paragraph (g) of this AD. Operators may use the reporting form contained in Appendixes B and C, as applicable, of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010. Send the report to Boeing Commercial Airplanes, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. The report must contain, at a minimum, the inspection results, a description of any discrepancies found, the airplane serial number, and the number of flight cycles and flight hours on the airplane. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements contained in this AD and has assigned OMB Control Number 2120-0056.

(1) If the inspection was done on or after the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the inspection.

(2) If the inspection was done before the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the effective date of this AD.

Paperwork Reduction Act Burden Statement

(l) A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2120-0056. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be approximately 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are mandatory. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden and suggestions for reducing the burden should be directed to the FAA at: 800 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20591, Attn: Information Collection Clearance Officer, AES-200.

Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(m)(1) The Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. Send information to Attn: Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA,

Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 917-6577; fax (425) 917-6590. Information may be e-mailed to: 9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) To request a different method of compliance or a different compliance time for this AD, follow the procedures in 14 CFR 39.19. Before using any approved AMOC on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify your principal maintenance inspector (PMI) or principal avionics inspector (PAI), as appropriate, or lacking a principal inspector, your local Flight Standards District Office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(3) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

Related Information

(n) For more information about this AD, contact Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle ACO, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 917-6577; fax (425) 917-6590. Information may be e-mailed to: 9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

Material Incorporated by Reference

(o) You must use Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-53A0233, dated February 19, 2010, under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P.O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; e-mail me.boecom@boeing.com; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(3) You may review copies of the service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

(4) You may also review copies of the service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at an NARA facility, call 202-741-6030, or go to http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 5, 2011.

Ali Bahrami,
Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.