

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

[Docket No. 97-NM-07-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; Lockheed Model L-188A and L-188C 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 all Lockheed Model L-188A and L-188C series airplanes. This proposal would require revising the Airplane Flight Manual (AFM) to prohibit the positioning of the power levers below the flight idle stop during flight, and to provide a statement of the consequences of positioning the power levers below flight idle stop. The proposed AD is prompted by incidents and accidents involving airplanes equipped with turboprop engines where the propeller ground beta was used improperly during flight. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent loss of airplane controllability, or engine overspeed and consequent loss of engine power caused by the power levers being positioned below the flight idle stop while the airplane is in flight.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by June 1, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-07-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 Lockheed Aeronautical Systems Support Company (LASSC), Field Support Department, Dept. 693, Zone 0755, 2251 Lake Park Drive, Smyrna, Georgia 30080. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, Campus Building, 1701 Columbia

Avenue, Suite 2-160, College Park, Georgia.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Thomas Peters, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Flight Test Branch, ACE-116A, FAA, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, Small Airplane Directorate, Campus Building, 1701 Columbia Avenue, Suite 2-160, College Park, Georgia 30337-2748; telephone (404) 305-7367; fax (404) 305-7348.

**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 97-NM-07-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-103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-07-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

**Discussion**

In recent years, the FAA has received reports of 14 incidents and/or accidents involving intentional or inadvertent operation of the propellers in the ground beta range, which occurred while the airplane was in flight on airplanes equipped with turboprop engines. (For the purposes of this proposal, Beta is defined as the range of

propeller operation intended for use during taxi, ground idle, or reverse operations as controlled by the power lever settings aft of the flight idle stop.)

Five of the fourteen in-flight beta occurrences were classified as accidents. In each of these five cases, operation of the propellers in the beta range occurred while the airplane was in flight. Operation of the propellers in the beta range during flight, if not prevented, could result in loss of airplane controllability, or engine overspeed with consequent loss of engine power.

Communication between the FAA and the public during a meeting held on June 11-12, 1996, in Seattle, Washington, revealed a lack of consistency of the information on in-flight beta operation contained in the FAA-approved airplane flight manual (AFM) for airplanes not certificated for in-flight operation with the power levers below the flight idle stop. (Airplanes that are certificated for this type of operation are not affected by the above-referenced conditions.)

**Explanation of Relevant Service Information**

The FAA has reviewed and approved a revision to the Limitations Section of the FAA-approved Electra 188C AFM, dated October 17, 1996. This revision specifies that positioning the power levers below the flight idle stop during flight is prohibited. Additionally, the revision contains a cautionary or warning statement of the consequences that such positioning of the power levers may lead to loss of airplane control, or may result in an engine overspeed condition and consequent loss of engine power.

**The FAA's Determination**

The FAA has examined the circumstances and reviewed all available information related to the incidents and accidents described previously. The FAA finds that the Limitations Section of the AFM's for certain airplanes must be revised to prohibit positioning the power levers below the flight idle stop while the airplane is in flight, and to provide a statement of the consequences of positioning the power levers below the flight idle stop. The FAA has determined that the affected airplanes include those that are equipped with turboprop engines and that are not certificated for in-flight operation with the power levers below the flight idle stop. Since Lockheed Model L-188A and L-188C series airplanes are equipped with turboprop engines, and are not certificated for in-flight

operation with the power levers positioned below the flight idle stop, the FAA finds that the AFM for these airplanes must be revised to include the limitation and statement of consequences described previously.

#### Explanation of the Requirements of the Proposed AD

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop in other Lockheed Model L-188A and L-188C series airplanes of the same type design, the proposed AD would require revising the Limitations Section of the AFM to prohibit the positioning of the power levers below the flight idle stop during flight, and to provide a statement of consequences of such positioning of the power levers.

#### Interim Action

This is considered interim action until final action is identified, at which time the FAA may consider further rulemaking.

#### Cost Impact

There are approximately 75 Lockheed Model L-188A and L-188C series airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 32 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 actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$1,920, 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:

**Lockheed:** Docket 97-NM-07-AD.

**Applicability:** All Model L-188A and L-188C series airplanes, 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 prevent loss of airplane controllability or engine overspeed with consequent loss of engine power caused by the power levers being positioned below the flight idle stop while the airplane is in flight, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, revise the Limitations Section of the FAA-approved Airplane Flight Manual (AFM) to include the following statements. This action may be accomplished by inserting either a copy of this AD into the AFM or the revision to the Limitations Section of the FAA-approved Electra 188A or 188C AFM, dated October 17, 1996.

"Positioning of power levers below the flight idle stop while the airplane is in flight is prohibited. Such positioning may lead to loss of airplane control or may result in an overspeed condition and consequent loss of engine power."

(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. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Operations Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Small Airplane Directorate.

**Note 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Atlanta ACO.

(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.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 16, 1997.

**Darrell M. Pederson,**

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

[FR Doc. 97-10316 Filed 4-21-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 71

[Airspace Docket No. 97-AWP-18]

#### Proposed Revision of Class E Airspace; Crescent City, Imperial County and Red Bluff, CA

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking.

**SUMMARY:** This notice proposes to revise Class E airspace areas at Crescent City, Imperial County and Red Bluff, CA., by removing the reference to part-time status of the surface areas. A review of airspace classification has made this action necessary. The intended effect of this proposal is to correct the legal description to reflect the actual operations (e.g., continuous or part-time).

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before May 31, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments on the proposal in triplicate to: Federal Aviation Administration, Attn: Manager, Operations Branch, AWP-530, Docket No. 97-AWP-18, Air Traffic Division, P.O. Box 92007, Worldway Postal Center, Los Angeles, California 90009.