DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–CE–77–AD; Amendment 39–10316; AD 98–04–03]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; SOCATA-Groupe AEROSPATIALE Models TB9, TB10, TB20, TB21, and TB200 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that applies to certain Socata-Groupe Aerospatiale (Socata) Models TB9, TB10, TB20, TB21, and TB200 airplanes. This AD requires inspecting the bolts and spacers of the upper attachments of the front belts for cracks, dents, etc. (damage); replacing any damaged bolts or spacers; incorporating a front belts upper attachment reinforcement kit; and reconditioning the belts. This AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for France. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent failure of the upper seat belt attachment caused by excessive loads on the upper attachment of the belt, which could result in bodily injury to the occupants during landing.

DATES: Effective March 24, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of March 24, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Service information that applies to this AD may be obtained from Socata-Groupe Aerospatiale, Socata Product Support, Aeroport Tarbes-Ossun-Lourdes, B P 930, 65009 Tarbes Cedex, France; telephone: 62.41.74.26; facsimile: 62.41.74.32; or the Product Support Manager, Socata-Groupe Aerospatiale, North Perry Airport, 7501 Pembroke Road, Pembroke Pines, Florida 33023; telephone: (954) 964–6877; facsimile: (954) 964–1668. This information may also be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–CE–77–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Karl Schletzbaum, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 1201 Walnut Street, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 426–6934; facsimile: (816) 426–2169.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Events Leading to the Issuance of This AD

A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an AD that would apply to certain Socata Models TB9, TB10, TB20, TB21, and TB200 airplanes was published in the **Federal Register** as a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on November 7, 1997 (62 FR 60189). The NPRM proposed to require inspecting the bolts and spacers of the upper attachments of the front belts for cracks, dents, etc. (damage); replacing any damaged bolts or spacers; incorporating a front belts upper attachment reinforcement kit; and reconditioning the belts. Accomplishment of the proposed action as specified in the NPRM would be in accordance with Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10–103 and Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10–104, both dated June 1996.

The NPRM was the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for France.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were received on the proposed rule or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public.

The FAA's Determination

After careful review of all available information related to the subject presented above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed except for minor editorial corrections. The FAA has determined that these minor corrections will not change the meaning of the AD and will not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 320 airplanes in the U.S. registry will be affected by this AD.

Accomplishing this replacement will take approximately 3 workhours per airplane, at an average labor rate of approximately $60 an hour. Parts to accomplish this AD cost approximately $300. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $153,600, or $480 per airplane.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein will 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 final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (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); and (3) 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 final 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, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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 a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

98–04–03 Socata—Groupe Aerospatiale: Amendment 39–10316; Docket No. 97–CE–77–AD.

Applicability: Models TB9, TB10, TB20, TB21, and TB200 airplanes, serial numbers 1 through 1701; 1707 to 1750; 1758 to 1763; 1767, 1768, and 1769, 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 (e) 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 in the body of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent failure of the upper seat belt attachment caused by excessive loads on the upper attachment of the belt, which could result in bodily injury to the occupants during landing, accomplish the following:

(a) Within the next 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, inspect the bolts and spacers of the upper attachments of the front belts for cracks, dents, etc. (damage), in accordance with the ACCOMPLISHMENT INSTRUCTIONS section of one of the following service bulletins, as applicable:

(1) Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10–103, dated June 1996, which applies to Socata Models TB10, TB20, TB21, and TB200 airplanes, and Model TB9 airplanes equipped with upholstering on the upper duct posts.

(2) Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10–104, dated June 1996, which applies to Socata Model TB9 airplanes not equipped with upholstering on the upper duct posts.

(b) Prior to further flight after the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, replace any damaged bolts or spacers found during the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD.

(c) Within the next 50 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD, incorporate either front belts upper attachment reinforcement kit No. OPT10 921000 or OPT10 920900 and recondition the belts in accordance with the ACCOMPLISHMENT INSTRUCTIONS section of the applicable service bulletin referenced in paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this AD.

(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.

(e) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an equivalent level of safety may be approved by the Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, 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 Small Airplane Directorate.

(f) Questions or technical information related to Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10–103 and Service Bulletin No. SB 10–104, both dated June 1996, should be directed to SOCATA—Groupe AEROSPATIALE, Socata Product Support, Aeroport Tarbes-Ossun-Lourdes, B P 930, 65009 Tarbes Cedex, France; or Perry Airport, 7501 Pembroke Road, Pembroke Pines, Florida 33023; telephone: (954) 964–6877; facsimile: (954) 964–1688. This service information may be examined at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

(g) The inspection and replacement required by this AD shall be done in accordance with Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10–103, dated June 1996, or Socata Service Bulletin No. SB 10–104, dated June 1996. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from SOCATA—Groupe AEROSPATIALE, Socata Product Support, Aeroport Tarbes-Ossun-Lourdes, B P 930, 65009 Tarbes Cedex, France; or Perry Airport, 7501 Pembroke Road, Pembroke Pines, Florida 33023. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri, or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, suite 700, Washington, DC.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in French AD 96–142(A) and French AD 96–143(A), both dated July 17, 1996.

(h) This amendment (39–10316) becomes effective on March 24, 1998.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on February 2, 1998.

Carolanne L. Cabrini,

Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–3230 Filed 2–9–98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–NM–12–AD; Amendment 39–10320; AD 98–04–07]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC–9 and DC–9–80 Series Airplanes, and C–9 (Military) Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment supersedes an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–9 and C–9 (military) series airplanes, that currently requires eddy current or dye penetrant inspection for cracks in the upper fuselage skin in the area of the aft pressure bulkhead tee. This amendment requires new improved repetitive inspections and follow-on actions, and expands the applicability of the existing AD to include additional airplanes. This amendment is prompted by additional reports of fatigue cracking and improperly seated attachments in the upper fuselage skin in the area of the aft pressure bulkhead tee. The actions specified in this AD are intended to detect and correct such fatigue cracking, which could result in rapid decompression of the fuselage and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

DATES: Effective February 25, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of February 25, 1998.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before April 13, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–NM–12–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from The Boeing Company, Douglas Products 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, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wahib Mina, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone (562) 627–5324; fax (562) 627–5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 19, 1982, the FAA issued AD 81–26–03 R1, amendment 39–4394 (47 FR 23697, June 1, 1982), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–9 and C–9 (military) series airplanes, to require eddy current or dye penetrant inspection for cracks in the upper fuselage skin in the area of the aft pressure bulkhead tee. That action was prompted by reports of fatigue cracking in the upper skin and improperly seated