DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99–NM–03–AD; Amendment 39–11396; AD 98–02–06 R1]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing 777–200 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment revises an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Boeing 777–200 series airplanes, that currently requires repetitive visual inspections to determine the presence and condition of the nut and cotter pin of the lock link mechanism on the side struts and drag struts on the main landing gear (MLG); and corrective action, if necessary. That AD was prompted by reports of missing or damaged components on the lock link mechanism. The actions specified by that AD are intended to prevent failure of the lock link mechanism to lock the MLG in the down position, and consequent collapse of the MLG during ground operation. This amendment provides an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections.

DATES: Effective December 7, 1999.

The incorporation by reference of Boeing Service Bulletin 777–32–0016, dated January 14, 1999, as listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of December 7, 1999.

The incorporation by reference of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777–32A0015, dated September 4, 1997, as listed in the regulations was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of February 9, 1997 (63 FR 3458, January 23, 1998).

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124–2207. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stan Wood, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–2772; fax (425) 227–1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) by revising AD 98–02–06, amendment 39–10288 (63 FR 3458, January 23, 1998), which is applicable to certain Boeing 777–200 series airplanes, was published in the **Federal Register** on August 20, 1999 (64 FR 45472). The action proposed to continue to require repetitive visual inspections to determine the presence and condition of the nut and cotter pin of the lock link mechanism on the side struts and drag struts on the main landing gear (MLG); and corrective action, if necessary. The action also proposed to provide an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections.

Comments

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were submitted in response to the proposal or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

The FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 40 Model 777–200 series airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 17 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD.

The inspection that is currently required by AD 98–02–06, and retained in this AD, takes approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $2,040, or $120 per airplane, per inspection cycle

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Should an operator elect to accomplish the optional terminating action rather than continue the repetitive inspections, it would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the replacement, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately $5,094 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this optional terminating action is estimated to be $5,154 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 final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from 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 removing amendment 39–10288 (63 FR 3458, January 23, 1998), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), amendment 39–11396 , to read as follows:

98–02–06 **R1 Boeing:** Amendment 39–11396. Docket 98–NM–03–AD. Revises AD 98–02–06, Amendment 39–10288.

Applicability: Model 777–200 series airplanes, line positions 1 through 40 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 (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 failure of the lock link mechanism to lock the main landing gear (MLG) in the down position, and consequent collapse of the MLG during ground operation, accomplish the following:

Restatement of the Requirements of AD 98–02–06

Repetitive Inspections and Corrective Actions

(a) Within 30 days after February 9, 1998 (the effective date of AD 98–02–06, amendment 39–10288), perform a visual inspection to determine the presence and condition of the cotter pin and nut of the lock link mechanism on the side struts and drag struts on the left- and right-hand MLG, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777–32A0015, dated September 4, 1997. If any discrepancy is found, prior to further flight, correct the discrepancy in accordance with the service bulletin. Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 75 days or 400 flight cycles, whichever occurs first.

New Actions Proposed By This AD

Optional Terminating Action

(b) Replacement of the existing retention bolt, end caps, washer, and nut of the lock link mechanism on the side struts and drag struts on the MLG with a new lock link assembly that incorporates a new bolt, washer, nut, and end-caps, in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 777–32–0016, dated January 14, 1999, constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

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, 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 2: 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

(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.

Incorporation by Reference

(e) The actions shall be done in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777–32A0015, dated September 4, 1997, or Boeing Service Bulletin 777–32–0016, dated January 14, 1999, as applicable.

(1) The incorporation by reference of Boeing Service Bulletin 777–32–0016, dated January 14, 1999, is approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) The incorporation by reference of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 777–32A0015, dated September 4, 1997, as listed in the regulations was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of February 9, 1997 (63 FR 3458, January 23, 1998).

(3) Copies may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124–2207. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(f) This amendment becomes effective on December 7, 1999.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on October 22, 1999.

D.L. Riggin,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 99–28247 Filed 11–1–99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99–NM–02–AD; Amendment 39–11394; AD 99–22–16]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Boeing Model 737 series airplanes, that requires a one-time detailed visual inspection of the upper decompression panel on the flight deck door to verify that a minimum overlap dimension exists, and corrective action, if necessary. This amendment is prompted by reports indicating that, during production, some upper decompression panels were installed incorrectly on the flight deck door. The actions specified by this AD are intended to detect an incorrectly installed upper decompression panel, which could cause the emergency exit panel on the flight deck door to become inoperable, thereby preventing crewmembers from performing essential duties during an emergency evacuation.

DATES: Effective December 7, 1999.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of December 7, 1999.

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124–2207. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mike Thompson, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–1157; fax (425) 227–1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Boeing Model 737 series airplanes was published in the **Federal Register** on August 20, 1999 (64 FR 45470). That action proposed to require a one-time detailed visual inspection of the upper decompression panel on the flight deck door to verify that a minimum overlap dimension exists, and corrective action, if necessary.

Comments

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were submitted in response to the proposal or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public.

Conclusion

The FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 1,299 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 901 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the required inspection, and that the average labor rate is $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection required