

the inspector. Inspection aids such as mirror, magnifying lenses, etc., may be used. Surface cleaning and elaborate access procedures may be required."

Detailed Visual/High Frequency Eddy Current Inspections

(b) Within 1,200 flight cycles or 18 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever is first: Do detailed visual and high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections to find cracks and broken fasteners of the inboard and outboard nacelle struts of the rear engine mount bulkhead per Part 1 and Part 2 of the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2202, dated December 21, 2000, as applicable. Doing the inspections required by this paragraph terminates the inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD.

(1) For airplanes on which the modification of the inboard struts specified in Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2065, Revision 6, dated May 29, 1997, HAS NOT been done: Repeat the applicable inspection at least every 1,200 flight cycles or 18 months, whichever is first.

(2) For Groups 3 and 4 airplanes on which the modification of the inboard struts specified in Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2065, Revision 6, dated May 29, 1997, HAS been done: Repeat the applicable inspection at least every 1,200 flight cycles.

(c) For Groups 1 and 5 airplanes, as listed in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2202, dated December 21, 2000, with web doublers and angle chords installed to repair cracking, as specified in Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2065, Revision 6, dated May 29, 1997; or Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2033, Revision 2, dated July 29, 1977: Within 1,200 flight cycles or 18 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever is first, do an HFEC inspection of the stop-drilled holes per Figure 1, Flag Notes 1 and 2, of the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2202, dated December 21, 2000. Repeat the inspection at least every 600 flight cycles.

Note 3: Accomplishment of the actions specified in paragraphs (b)(1), (b)(2), and (c) of this AD before the effective date of this AD, per Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2033, dated September 13, 1974; or Revision 1, dated November 14, 1975; or Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2065, dated October 30, 1981; Revision 1, dated December 19, 1983; Revision 2, dated October 23, 1984; Revision 3, dated March 14, 1986; or Revision 5, dated November 2, 1989; is considered acceptable for compliance with the applicable actions specified in this AD.

Repair

(d) Except as provided by paragraph (e) of this AD: Before further flight, repair any discrepancy (crack or broken fastener) found during any inspection required by this AD, per a method approved by the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA; or per data meeting the type certification basis of the airplane approved by a Boeing Company Designated Engineering Representative (DER) who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle

ACO, to make such findings. For a repair method to be approved by the Manager, Seattle ACO, as required by this paragraph, the approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(e) Web cracks in the existing bulkhead frames repaired with the web doublers and angle chords are acceptable, provided they are stop drilled and are within the limits specified in Figure 1, Flag Notes 1 and 2, of the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2202, dated December 21, 2000.

Optional Terminating Modification

(f) For Groups 3, 4, and 5 airplanes, as listed in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2202, dated December 21, 2000:

Accomplishment of the modification of the outboard nacelle struts, as specified in Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2065, Revision 6, dated May 29, 1997, terminates the repetitive inspections required by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this AD for the outboard nacelle struts only.

Note 4: Accomplishment of the modification of the outboard nacelle struts before the effective date of this AD per Boeing Service Bulletin 747-54-2065, dated October 30, 1981; Revision 1, dated December 19, 1983; Revision 2, dated October 23, 1984; Revision 3, dated March 14, 1986; or Revision 5, dated November 2, 1989; is considered acceptable for compliance with paragraph (e) of this AD.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(g) 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 ACO. 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 5: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Seattle ACO.

Special Flight Permit

(h) 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 January 2, 2002.

Lirio Liu Nelson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 02-457 Filed 1-8-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2000-NM-164-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-81, -82, and -83 Series Airplanes, and Model MD-88 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 DC-9-81, -82, and -83 series airplanes, and Model MD-88 airplanes. This proposal would require an inspection of the electrical power feeder cables in the aft cargo compartment sidewall for chafing and/or preloading, and corrective actions, if necessary. This action is necessary to prevent possible arcing of the electrical power cables in the aft cargo compartment sidewall and consequent damage to equipment and the adjacent structure, which could result in smoke and/or fire in the cargo compartment. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by February 25, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2000-NM-164-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. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227-1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: 9-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2000-NM-164-AD" in the subject line and need not be submitted in triplicate. Comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII text.

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: Data and Service Management, Dept. C1-L5A (D800-

0024). 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elvin Wheeler, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-130L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5344; 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 action may be changed in light of the comments received.

Submit comments using the following format:

- Organize comments issue-by-issue. For example, discuss a request to change the compliance time and a request to change the service bulletin reference as two separate issues.
- For each issue, state what specific change to the proposed AD is being requested.
- Include justification (e.g., reasons or data) for each request.

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 action must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 2000-NM-164-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. 2000-NM-164-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received a report indicating that chafed electrical power feeder cables in the aft cargo compartment sidewall were found during a "C" check on a McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-82 series airplane. Investigation has revealed that cables rubbing against a floor support cutout due to a preload condition was the cause. This condition, if not corrected, could result in possible arcing of the electrical power feeder cables in the aft cargo compartment sidewall and consequent damage to equipment and the adjacent structure, which could result in smoke and/or fire in the cargo compartment.

The existing design of the electrical power feeder cables on certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-81 and -83 series airplanes, and Model MD-88 airplanes is identical to that on the affected Model DC-9-82 series airplanes. Therefore, all of these models may be subject to the same unsafe condition.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD80-24A124, Revision 01, dated August 24, 2000. The service bulletin describes procedures for a one-time general visual inspection of the electrical power feeder cables on each side of the floor support strut at station Y=1231.000 for chafing and preloading against the adjacent floor support cutout, and corrective actions, if necessary. The corrective actions include repairing the cables; installing a shim on the bracket; and repositioning the cables; as applicable. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

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.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 112 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that

57 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 inspection, 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 \$3,420, 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 proposed AD were not adopted. The cost impact figures discussed in AD rulemaking actions represent only the time necessary to perform the specific actions actually required by the AD. These figures typically do not include incidental costs, such as the time required to gain access and close up, planning time, or time necessitated by other administrative actions.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would 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. Therefore, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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 2000–NM–164–AD.

Applicability: Model DC–9–81, –82, and –83 series airplanes, and Model MD–88 airplanes; certificated in any category; as listed in McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD80–24A124, Revision 01, dated August 24, 2000.

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 possible arcing of the electrical power cables in the aft cargo compartment sidewall and consequent damage to equipment and the adjacent structure, which could result in smoke and/or fire in the cargo compartment, accomplish the following:

Inspection and Corrective Action, if Necessary

(a) Within 1 year after the effective date of this AD, perform a general visual inspection of the electrical power feeder cables on each side of the floor support strut at station Y=1231.00 for chafing and preloading against the adjacent floor support strut, in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Alert Service Bulletin MD80–24A124, dated Revision 01, dated August 24, 2000.

Note 2: For the purposes of this AD, a general visual inspection is defined as: “A visual examination of an interior or exterior area, installation, or assembly to detect obvious damage, failure, or irregularity. This level of inspection is made under normally available lighting conditions such as daylight, hangar lighting, flashlight, or drop-light, and may require removal or opening of access panels or doors. Stands, ladders, or platforms may be required to gain proximity to the area being checked.”

Note 3: Accomplishment of the actions required by this AD, before the effective date of this AD, in accordance with McDonnell Douglas MD–80 Service Bulletin 24–124, dated September 26, 1991, is considered

acceptable for compliance with the requirements of this AD.

(1) Condition 1. If no chafing and preloading of the electrical power feeder cables are found, no further action is required by this AD.

(2) Condition 2. If any chafing of the electrical power feeder cable is found, before further flight, repair the cable, install a shim on the bracket, and reposition the cable; in accordance with the service bulletin.

(3) Condition 3. If any preloading of the electrical power feeder cable is found, before further flight, install a shim on the bracket and reposition the cable, in accordance with the service bulletin.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(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, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA. 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 4: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

Special Flight Permits

(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 January 2, 2002.

Ali Bahrami,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 02–456 Filed 1–8–02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

30 CFR Part 250

RIN 1010–AC92

Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations on the Outer Continental Shelf; Suspension of Operations for Exploration Under Salt Sheets

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: MMS proposes to modify regulations that govern suspensions of operations for oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). There are instances where oil and gas lessees begin timely analysis of geophysical

data early in the lease term, but the analysis proves inconclusive because of problems caused by the existence of salt sheets underlying the seabed and overlying possible hydrocarbon deposits. In such cases, the proposed rule would allow lessees to apply for a suspension of operations (SOO) to complete the necessary geophysical analysis before drilling a well. To qualify for a suspension of operations, the lessee must show it has made and will continue to make substantial efforts and financial commitment to process and reprocess its geophysical data.

DATES: MMS will consider all comments received by February 8, 2002. MMS may not fully consider comments received after February 8, 2002.

ADDRESSES: You may mail or hand-carry comments (three copies) to the Department of the Interior; Minerals Management Service; Mail Stop 4024; 381 Elden Street; Herndon, Virginia 20170–4817; Attention: Rules Processing Team.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Mirabella, Engineering and Operations Division, (703) 787–1598.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: When a lessee obtains an oil and gas lease on the OCS, MMS regulations allow the lessee flexibility to schedule activities during the primary term. At the end of the primary term, the lease can continue in force only by production, suspension, drilling, or well reworking operations as approved by the Secretary. MMS regulations authorize suspensions before discovery of oil or gas in paying quantities only in limited circumstances. Generally, when a lease reaches the end of the primary term, the lessee must conduct drilling operations until it has made a discovery of oil or gas and a commitment to proceed to development and production.

Although lessees have made great progress in imaging potential objectives in areas under salt sheets, processing, analyzing, and interpreting geophysical, geological, and other relevant data and information is complex and time-consuming. As a result, lessees have been faced with the end-of-lease-term decisions to either allow the lease to expire or drill a well without sufficient geophysical information.

On December 21, 2000, MMS issued Notice to Lessees (NTL) 2000–G22, Subsalt Lease Term Extension. That NTL provides for extension of lease terms for subsalt exploration in cases where the lessee has drilled a well on the lease during the primary term but needs additional time to process geophysical data before drilling another well. The NTL did not provide