

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 16, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

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

[FR Doc. 98-16492 Filed 6-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-178-AD; Amendment
39-10611; AD 98-11-52]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation
Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for
comments.

SUMMARY: This document publishes in the **Federal Register** an amendment adopting airworthiness directive (AD) T98-11-52 that was sent previously to all known U.S. owners and operators of Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes by individual telegrams. This AD requires removal of the fuel boost pump wiring in the conduits of the wing and center fuel tanks; an inspection to detect damage of the wiring, and corrective action, if necessary; and eventual installation of teflon sleeving over the electrical cable. This action is prompted by reports of severe wear of the fuel boost pump wiring due to chafing between the wiring and the surrounding conduit inside the fuel tank; pin-hole-sized holes in the conduit that appear to be the result of arc-through of the conduit; and exposure of the main tank boost pump wire conductor inside a conduit and signs of arcing to the wall of the conduit. The actions specified by this AD are intended to detect and correct chafing and electrical arcing between the fuel boost pump wiring and the surrounding conduit, which, if not corrected, could result in arc-through of the conduit, and consequent fire or explosion of the fuel tank.

DATES: Effective June 29, 1998, to all persons except those persons to whom it was made immediately effective by telegraphic AD T98-11-52, issued on May 14, 1998, which contained the requirements of this amendment.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director

of the Federal Register as of June 29, 1998.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before August 24, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-178-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

The applicable service information may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. This information may be examined 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. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dorr Anderson, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM-140S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2684; fax (425) 227-1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Issuance of Telegraphic AD T98-10-51

On May 7, 1998, the FAA issued telegraphic AD T98-10-51, applicable to all Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes, to require removal of the fuel boost pump wiring in the conduits of the wing fuel tanks; a one-time detailed visual inspection to detect damage of the wiring; reinstallation of the wiring with teflon sleeving, or replacement of damaged wiring with new wiring and teflon sleeving; and submission of damaged parts to Boeing. Telegraphic AD T98-10-51 was prompted by reports of severe wear of the fuel boost pump wiring due to chafing between the in-tank fuel boost pump wiring and the surrounding conduit inside the fuel tank, and pin-hole-sized holes in two sections of the fuel boost pump conduit that appeared to be the result of arc-through of the conduit. The actions required by that telegraphic AD were intended to detect and correct such chafing, which could result in arc-through of the conduit, and consequent fire or explosion of the fuel tank.

Issuance of Telegraphic AD T98-11-51

On May 10, 1998, the FAA issued telegraphic AD T98-11-51, which is applicable to all Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. That AD superseded telegraphic AD T98-10-51 to continue to require

removal of the fuel boost pump wiring in the conduits of the wing fuel tanks; a detailed visual inspection to detect damage of the wiring; and corrective action, if necessary. Additionally, that telegraphic AD required eventual installation of teflon sleeving over the electrical cable, which terminated the requirements of the telegraphic AD.

Telegraphic AD T98-11-51 was prompted by a report indicating that the left main tank boost pump power wire conductor was exposed at three areas inside the conduit. At least one of the areas exhibited signs of arcing to the wall of the conduit. In addition, several reports of severe chafing had been received since the issuance of telegraphic AD T98-10-51. The actions required by telegraphic AD T98-11-51 were intended to detect and correct chafing and electrical arcing between the fuel boost pump wiring and the surrounding conduit, which, if not corrected, could result in arc-through of the conduit, and consequent fire or explosion of the fuel tank.

In telegraphic AD T98-11-51, the FAA required inspection of airplanes that had accumulated between 40,000 and 50,000 total flight hours based on the significance of the problems on the high-time airplanes reported at that time, and the lack of available data for airplanes that had accumulated between 40,000 and 50,000 total flight hours. However, the FAA indicated in that telegraphic AD that it would continue to monitor inspection reports to determine whether an adjustment to the compliance time was warranted.

Issuance of Telegraphic AD T98-11-52

Since the issuance of telegraphic AD T98-11-51, the FAA has received inspection results indicating that exposed copper wire and significant chafing was found on other Model 737-200 series airplanes that had accumulated flight hours below those specified in earlier reports.

The FAA has determined that it is necessary to expand the inspection requirement to airplanes that have accumulated less than 40,000 total flight hours. This is necessary to ensure that these airplanes have not also developed a problem with chafing and electrical arcing between the fuel boost pump wiring and the surrounding conduit.

When telegraphic AD T98-11-51 superseded telegraphic AD T98-10-51, the FAA had received inspection reports indicating that the center fuel tank boost pump wiring was not showing chafing and did not present a safety of flight problem on Model 737-100 and -200 series airplanes. (It should be noted that the center fuel tank boost pump wiring

is located in the main tanks, not within the center fuel tank itself.) As a result, the requirement for inspection of the center fuel tank boost pump wiring on Model 737-100 and -200 series airplanes was removed in telegraphic AD T98-11-51. Inspection results received since the issuance of telegraphic AD T98-11-51 indicate that chafing has occurred in the center fuel tank boost pump wiring of some Model 737-100 and -200 series airplanes. Telegraphic AD T98-11-52 restores the requirement to inspect the center fuel tank boost pump wiring on all affected models.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998. The alert service bulletin describes procedures for removal of the fuel boost pump wiring in the conduits of the wing fuel tanks and center fuel tanks; an inspection to detect damage of the wiring; and corrective action, if necessary. (The corrective actions include replacing the wiring or conduit with new or serviceable parts.) This alert service bulletin also describes procedures for eventual installation of teflon sleeving over the electrical cable. The NSC's provide information concerning optional parts and procedures.

Explanation of Requirements of the Rule

Since the unsafe condition described is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design, the FAA issued telegraphic AD T98-11-52 to detect and correct chafing and electrical arcing between the fuel boost pump wiring and the surrounding conduit, which, if not corrected, could result in arc-through of the conduit, and consequent fire or explosion of the fuel tank. This AD supersedes telegraphic AD T98-11-51 to continue to require removal of the fuel boost pump wiring in the conduits of the wing fuel tanks; a detailed visual inspection to detect damage of the wiring; and corrective action, if necessary. Additionally, this AD continues to require eventual installation of teflon sleeving over the electrical cable, which terminates the requirements of the AD.

This AD requires inspection of airplanes that have accumulated less than 40,000 total flight hours. In addition, this AD adds a requirement for inspection of the fuel boost pump

wiring in the conduits of the center fuel tanks on Model 737-100 and -200 series airplanes that have accumulated 40,000 or more total flight hours.

The actions are required to be accomplished in accordance with alert service bulletin and notices of status change described previously.

Since it was found that immediate corrective action was required, notice and opportunity for prior public comment thereon were impracticable and contrary to the public interest, and good cause existed to make the AD effective immediately by individual telegrams issued on May 14, 1998, to all known U.S. owners and operators of all Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. These conditions still exist, and the AD is hereby published in the **Federal Register** as an amendment to section 39.13 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 39.13) to make it effective to all persons.

Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and, thus, was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this 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 under the caption **ADDRESSES**. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the AD action and determining whether additional rulemaking action would be needed.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the rule that might suggest a need to modify the 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 that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this AD will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this rule must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to

Docket Number 98-NM-178-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

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.

The FAA has determined that this regulation is an emergency regulation that must be issued immediately to correct an unsafe condition in aircraft, and that it is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866. It has been determined further that this action involves an emergency regulation under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979). If it is determined that this emergency regulation otherwise would be significant under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures, a final regulatory evaluation will be prepared and placed in the Rules Docket. A copy of it, if filed, 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 adding the following new airworthiness directive:

98-11-52 BOEING: Amendment 39-10611. Docket 98-NM-178-AD.

Applicability: All Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 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 (l)(1) 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 detect and correct chafing and electrical arcing between the fuel boost pump wiring and the surrounding conduit, which, if not corrected, could result in arc-through of the conduit, and consequent fire or explosion of the fuel tank, accomplish the following:

(a) For all airplanes that have accumulated 50,000 or more total flight hours as of the effective date of this AD: Prior to further flight, remove the fuel boost pump wiring from the in-tank conduit for the aft boost pumps in main tanks #1 and #2, and perform a detailed visual inspection to detect damage of the wiring, in accordance with the procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(b) For all airplanes that have accumulated less than 50,000 total flight hours as of receipt of telegraphic AD T98-11-51: Prior to the accumulation of 40,000 total flight hours, or within 14 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, remove the fuel boost pump wiring from the in-tank conduit for the aft boost pumps in main tanks #1 and #2, and perform a detailed visual inspection to detect damage of the wiring, in accordance with the procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(c) For all airplanes: Remove the fuel boost pump wiring from the in-tank conduit for the center tank left and right boost pumps, and perform a detailed visual inspection to detect damage of the wiring, in accordance with the procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998. Accomplish the inspection at the earliest of the times specified in paragraphs (c)(1), (c)(2), and (c)(3).

(1) For Model 737-300, -400, and -500 series airplanes: Inspect prior to the accumulation of 40,000 total flight hours, or within 14 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(2) For Model 737-100 and -200 series airplanes: Inspect prior to the accumulation of 40,000 total flight hours, or within 10 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(3) For all airplanes: Inspect prior to the accumulation of 50,000 total flight hours, or

within 5 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(d) For all airplanes: Prior to the accumulation of 30,000 total flight hours or within 45 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, remove the fuel boost pump wiring from the in-tank conduit for the aft boost pumps in main tanks #1 and #2, and the center tank left and right boost pumps, and perform a detailed visual inspection to detect damage of the wiring, in accordance with the procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(e) If red, yellow, blue, or green wire insulation cannot be seen through the outer jacket of the electrical cable during any inspection required by this AD: Prior to further flight, accomplish paragraph (e)(1), (e)(2), or (e)(3) of this AD in accordance with procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(1) Install teflon sleeving over the electrical cable, and reinstall the cable. Or

(2) Reinstall the electrical cable without teflon sleeving over the cable. Within 500 flight hours after accomplishment of the reinstallation, repeat the inspection described in paragraph (d) of this AD; and install teflon sleeving over the cable. Or

(3) Replace the electrical cable with new cable without teflon sleeving. Within 18 months or 6,000 flight hours, whichever occurs first, repeat the inspection specified in paragraph (d) of this AD, and install teflon sleeving over the cable.

(f) If red, yellow, blue, or green wire insulation can be seen through the outer jacket of the electrical cable during any inspection required by this AD, but no evidence of electrical arcing is found: Prior to further flight, accomplish either paragraph (f)(1) or (f)(2) of this AD in accordance with the procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(1) Replace the damaged electrical cable with a new cable, install teflon sleeving over the cable, and reinstall the cable. Or

(2) Replace the electrical cable with a new cable without teflon sleeving. Within 18 months or 6,000 flight hours, whichever occurs first, repeat the inspection described in paragraph (d) of this AD; and install teflon sleeving over the cable.

(g) If any evidence of electrical arcing but no evidence of fuel leakage is found on the removed electrical cable during any inspection required by this AD: Prior to further flight, accomplish paragraphs (g)(1) and (g)(2) of this AD in accordance with the procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(1) Verify the integrity of the conduit in accordance with the instructions contained in NSC 03 to the alert service bulletin. And

(2) Accomplish either paragraph (g)(2)(i) or (g)(2)(ii) of this AD in accordance with the alert service bulletin.

(i) Replace the damaged electrical cable with a new cable, install teflon sleeving over the cable, and reinstall the cable. Or

(ii) Replace the electrical cable with a new cable without teflon sleeving. Within 18 months or 6,000 flight hours, whichever occurs first, repeat the inspection described in paragraph (d) of this AD; and install teflon sleeving over the cable.

(h) If any evidence of fuel is found on the removed electrical cable during any inspection required by this AD: Prior to further flight, accomplish paragraphs (h)(1) and (h)(2) of this AD in accordance with the procedures specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(1) Replace the conduit section where electrical arcing was found. And

(2) Accomplish either paragraph (h)(2)(i) or (h)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Replace the damaged electrical cable with a new cable, install teflon sleeving over the cable, and reinstall the cable. Or

(ii) Replace the electrical cable with a new cable without teflon sleeving. Within 18 months or 6,000 flight hours, whichever occurs first, repeat the inspection described in paragraph (d) of this AD; and install teflon sleeving over the cable.

(i) For Groups 1 and 2 airplanes, as identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998: Concurrent with the first accomplishment of corrective action in accordance with paragraph (e), (f), (g), or (h) of this AD, as applicable, replace the case ground wire with a new wire in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998; as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998.

(j) Installation of teflon sleeving over any electrical cable that is new or has been inspected in accordance with paragraph (a), (b), (c), or (d) of this AD, constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

(k) If any damage specified in paragraph (f), (g), or (h) of this AD is found during any inspection required by this AD, within 10 days after accomplishing the inspection required by paragraph (a), (b), (c), or (d) of this AD, as applicable, accomplish paragraphs (k)(1) and (k)(2) of this AD. Information collection requirements contained in this regulation have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) and have been assigned OMB Control Number 2120-0056.

(1) Submit any damaged electrical cables and conduits to Boeing, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998,

NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998; include the serial number of the airplane, the number of total flight hours and flight cycles accumulated on the airplane, and the location of the electrical cable on the airplane.

(2) For airplanes that are inspected after the effective date of this AD, submit the serial number of the airplane, the number of total flight hours and flight cycles accumulated on the airplane, and the location of the electrical cable on the airplane to the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; fax (425) 227-1181.

(l)(1) 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.

(l)(2) Alternative methods of compliance, approved previously in accordance with telegraphic AD T98-10-51 or telegraphic AD T98-11-51 are approved as alternative methods of compliance with this AD.

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

(m) 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.

(n) The actions shall be done in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-28A1120, dated April 24, 1998, as revised by Notices of Status Change NSC 01, dated May 7, 1998, NSC 02, dated May 8, 1998, and NSC 03, dated May 9, 1998. 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 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.

(o) This amendment becomes effective on June 29, 1998, to all persons except those persons to whom it was made immediately effective by telegraphic AD T98-11-52, issued on May 14, 1998, which contained the requirements of this amendment.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 12, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-16308 Filed 6-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98-NM-181-AD; Amendment 39-10625; AD 98-13-34]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica, S.A. (EMBRAER), Model EMB-145 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to all EMBRAER Model EMB-145 series airplanes. This action requires repetitive emergency extension (free-fall) functional tests of the nose landing gear (NLG), and lubrication of all NLG hinge points, to ensure that the NLG extends and locks down properly; and corrective action, if necessary. This amendment is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified in this AD are intended to prevent failure of the NLG to extend and lock down properly, which could result in damage to the airplane structure, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane upon landing.

DATES: Effective July 9, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of July 9, 1998.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before July 24, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98-NM-181-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (EMBRAER), P.O. Box 343—CEP 12.225, Sao Jose dos Campos—SP, Brazil. 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, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix Boulevard, suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Curtis Jackson, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe and Propulsion Branch, ACE-117A, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix Boulevard, suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia 30349; telephone (770) 703-6083; fax (770) 703-6097.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Departamento de Aviacao Civil (DAC), which is the airworthiness authority for Brazil, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all EMBRAER Model EMB-145 series airplanes. The DAC advises that it has received a report indicating that the nose landing gear (NLG) on a Model EMB-145 series airplane failed to extend and lock down upon landing, even after accomplishment of the procedures for abnormal emergency landing gear extension by the override switch and free-fall mechanism. As a result, the airplane landed with the NLG not fully locked in the down position, which resulted in minor damage to the airplane structure. The exact cause of the failure of the NLG to extend and lock down properly has not been determined at this time. This condition, if not corrected, could result in damage to the airplane structure, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane upon landing.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

EMBRAER has issued Alert Service Bulletin 145-32-A029, dated April 15, 1998, which describes procedures for performing repetitive emergency extension (free-fall) functional tests of the NLG, and lubrication of all NLG hinge points, to ensure that the NLG extends and locks down properly; and corrective action, if necessary. Corrective actions include performing a normal system functional test of the NLG for five cycles, and repeating the emergency extension functional test of the NLG.

EMBRAER Alert Service Bulletin 145-32-A029, dated April 15, 1998, references two chapters in the EMBRAER Aircraft Maintenance Manual (AMM) as additional sources of information to accomplish the functional test procedures. Chapter 32-34-00 of the AMM describes procedures for the emergency extension (free-fall) functional test, and Chapter 32-30-00 of the AMM describes procedures for the normal system functional extension test.

The DAC classified this alert service bulletin as mandatory and issued