

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39****[Docket No. 97-CE-149-AD]****RIN 2120-AA64****Airworthiness Directives; Pilatus Aircraft Ltd. Model PC-7 Airplanes****AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to certain Pilatus Aircraft Ltd. Model PC-7 airplanes. The proposed AD would require replacing the rudder and elevator pivot arms with parts of improved design. The proposed AD results from reports of cracks in the elevator and rudder trim tab pivot arms on the above-referenced airplanes. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the elevator and rudder caused by fatigue cracking of the pivot arms, which could result in reduced airplane controllability and possible loss of control of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before March 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-CE-149-AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. Comments may be inspected at this location between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted.

Service information that applies to the proposed AD may be obtained from Pilatus Aircraft Ltd., Customer Liaison Manager, CH-6371 Stans, Switzerland; telephone: +41 41 619 6509; facsimile: +41 41 610 3351. This information also may be examined at the Rules Docket at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Roman T. Gabrys, Project Officer, Small Airplane Directorate, Airplane Certification Service, FAA, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 426-6932; facsimile: (816) 426-2169.

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

should 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 that summarizes 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 No. 97-CE-149-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, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-CE-149-AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Discussion

The Federal Office for Civil Aviation (FOCA), which is the airworthiness authority for Switzerland, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Pilatus Model PC-7 airplanes. The FOCA reports that fatigue cracks are forming in the elevator and rudder pivot arms of the above-referenced airplanes.

This condition, if not corrected in a timely manner, could result in failure of the elevator or rudder, reduced airplane controllability, and/or possible loss of control of the airplane.

Relevant Service Information

Pilatus has issued Service Bulletin No. PC7-55-001, Revision No. 1, dated June 20, 1995, which specifies procedures for replacing the rudder and elevator pivot arms with parts of improved design.

The FAA's Determination

This airplane model is manufactured in Switzerland and is type certificated for operation in the United States under

the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to the bilateral airworthiness agreement, the FOCA has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above.

The FAA has examined the findings; reviewed all available information, including the service information referenced above; and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of the Provisions of the Proposed AD

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop in other Pilatus PC-7 airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the FAA is proposing AD action. The proposed AD would require replacing the rudder and elevator pivot arms with parts of improved design. Accomplishment of the proposed replacement would be in accordance with the previously referenced service bulletin.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 8 airplanes in the U.S. registry would be affected by the proposed AD, that it would take approximately 6 workhours per airplane to accomplish the proposed replacement, and that the average labor rate is approximately \$60 an hour. Modification kits cost approximately \$300 per airplane. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$5,280, or \$660 per airplane.

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 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) 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 has been placed 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 a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

Pilatus Aircraft Ltd.: Docket No. 97-CE-149-AD.

Applicability: Model PC-7 airplanes, serial numbers MSN 001 through MSN 564, 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 upon accumulating 1,000 hours time-in-service (TIS) or within the next 100 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, unless already accomplished.

To prevent fatigue failure of the elevator and rudder trim tab pivot arms because of cracks, which could result in the loss of airplane control, accomplish the following:

(a) Replace the rudder and elevator pivot arms with parts of improved design as specified in and in accordance with Pilatus Service Bulletin No. PC7-55-001, Revision No. 1, dated June 20, 1995.

(b) 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.

(c) 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, 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.

(d) Questions or technical information related to Pilatus Service Bulletin No. PC7-55-001, Revision No. 1, dated June 20, 1995, should be directed to Pilatus Aircraft Ltd., Customer Liaison Manager, CH-6371 Stans, Switzerland; telephone: +41 41 619 6509; facsimile: +41 41 610 3351. 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 64106.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on January 28, 1998.

Terry L. Chasteen,

Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket Nos. 97-NM-09-AD, 97-NM-97-AD, 97-NM-80-AD, and 97-NM-81-AD]

RIN Nos. 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives: Boeing 727 Series Airplanes; Notice of Public Meetings

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings, reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: This notice reopens the comment period and announces two public meetings on the subject proposed airworthiness directives (AD's) that would reduce payload limits for converted Boeing 727 cargo airplanes. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss technical issues related to loads and stresses on cargo floors and margins of safety. The comment period is being reopened to facilitate collection and consideration of data concerning these technical issues.

DATES: The public meetings will be held February 18-19 and April 1-3, 1998, at 9:00 a.m., in Seattle, Washington. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. on

the day of each meeting. Comments must be received no later than April 24, 1998.

ADDRESSES: The public meetings will be held at the following location:

The Radisson Hotel, 17001 Pacific Highway South, Seattle Washington 98188, Telephone 206-244-6000.

Persons who are unable to attend the meeting may mail their comments (clearly marked with the docket numbers) in triplicate to: Federal Aviation Administration, Northwest Mountain Region, Regulations Branch (ANM-114), 1601 Lind Avenue, SW, Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Written comments to the dockets will receive the same consideration as statements made at the public meeting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests to present a statement at the public meetings and questions regarding the logistics of the meeting should be directed to Gerald Lakin, Federal Aviation Administration, Northwest Mountain Region, Transport Airplane Directorate (ANM-115), 1601 Lind Avenue, SW, Renton, Washington, 98055-4056, telephone (425) 227-1187, fax (425) 227-1320.

Questions concerning the proposed Airworthiness Directives should be directed to Paul Sconyers, Associate Manager, Airframe and Propulsion Branch, ACE-117A, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix Boulevard, Suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia 303349; telephone (770) 703-6076; fax (770) 703-6097.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Participation at the Public Meeting on the Proposed Airworthiness Directives

Requests from persons who wish to present oral statements at the public meetings should be received by the FAA no later than 10 days prior to each meeting. Such requests should be submitted to Gerald Lakin as listed in the section titled **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above, and should include a written summary of oral remarks to be presented, and an estimate of time needed for the presentation. Requests received after the date specified above will be scheduled if there is time available during the meeting; however, the names of those individuals may not appear on the written agenda. The FAA will prepare an agenda of speakers that will be available at the meeting. To accommodate as many speakers as possible, the amount of time allocated to each speaker may be less than the amount of time requested. Those persons desiring to have available