

Proposed Rules

Federal Register

Vol. 67, No. 238

Wednesday, December 11, 2002

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002-NM-187-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 767-200 and 767-300 Series 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 Boeing Model 767-200 and 767-300 series airplanes. This proposal would require modification of the installation of the aft pressure bulkhead-to-floor insulation blankets. This action is necessary to avoid interference with venting during a rapid decompression in the bulk cargo compartment; such interference could result in damage to the floor structure as well as damage to certain control cables leading to the empennage, leading to reduced controllability of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by January 27, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-187-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9 a.m. and 3 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. 2002-NM-187-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 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Masterson, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2772; fax (425) 227-1181.

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 2002-NM-187-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. 2002-NM-187-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received a report that, during the structural integrity certification of the Model 767-400ER series airplane, the manufacturer found that the seal created by the insulation blankets in the aft pressure bulkhead-to-floor area did not allow the airplane to meet requirements for decompression. This condition, if not corrected, could interfere with venting during a rapid decompression in the bulk cargo compartment; such interference could result in damage to the floor structure as well as damage to certain control cables leading to the empennage, possibly leading to reduced controllability of the airplane.

As a result of this finding, the configuration of the insulation blankets in the aft pressure bulkhead-to-floor area was changed in production of the Model 767-400ER series airplanes. The same change was also made to the Model 767-200 and 767-300 series airplanes. However, for those airplanes which had already been delivered, the configuration of the insulation blankets in the aft pressure bulkhead-to-floor area may prevent venting during a rapid decompression in the bulk cargo area. This proposed AD would apply to those airplanes.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Service Bulletin 767-25A0300, Revision 1, dated May 2, 2002, which describes procedures for modification of the installation of the aft pressure bulkhead-to-floor insulation blankets. 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.

Clarification of Compliance Time

The service bulletin recommends that the modification be accomplished during the next heavy maintenance check when the aft galleys are removed; such checks are performed approximately every 6 years. This NPRM proposes that the modification be accomplished within 5 years of the effective date of the final rule. Although the compliance time is stated differently in the two documents, the period of time proposed in this NPRM is essentially the same as that in the service bulletin.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 729 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 311 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 3 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed modification, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$397 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$179,447, or \$577 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. The manufacturer may cover the cost of replacement parts associated with this proposed AD, subject to warranty conditions. Manufacturer warranty remedies may also be available for labor costs associated with this proposed AD.

As a result, the costs attributable to the proposed AD may be less than stated above.

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:

Boeing: Docket 2002–NM–187–AD.

Applicability: Model 767–200 and –300 series airplanes, having line numbers 1 through 757 inclusive, 759 through 768 inclusive, 770 through 772 inclusive, 774 through 780 inclusive, 786, and 788 through 790 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 (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 interference with venting during a rapid decompression in the bulk cargo compartment, which could result in damage to the floor structure as well as damage to certain control cables leading to the empennage, leading to reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Modification

(a) Within 60 months of the effective date of this AD: Modify the installation of the aft pressure bulkhead-to-floor insulation blankets, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Service Bulletin 767–25A0300, Revision 1, dated May 2, 2002.

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, Seattle 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, 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

(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 December 4, 2002.

Vi L. Lipski, Manager,

Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 02–31179 Filed 12–10–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P