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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2013-0361; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-026-AD; Amendment 39-17527; AD 2013-15-11]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 727 airplanes. This AD was prompted by a report of cracking in the left-side chord of the fin closure rib on the vertical stabilizer. This AD requires repetitive inspections of the left and right side chords of the fin closure rib for cracking and corrosion, and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking and corrosion in the left- and right-side chords of the fin closure rib, which could lead to widespread cracking in the chords that might weaken the fin closure rib structure and result in loss of airplane control due to lack of horizontal stabilizer support.

DATES: This AD is effective September 20, 2013.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in the AD as of September 20, 2013.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P.O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and

other information. The address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is Document Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6577; fax: 425-917-6590; email: berhane.alazar@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an AD that would apply to the specified products. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on May 2, 2013 (78 FR 25662). The NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections of the left- and right-side chords of the fin closure rib for cracking and corrosion, and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We have considered the comments received. Boeing stated that it supports the NPRM (78 FR 25662, May 2, 2013).

FedEx Express commented that it has four airplanes that will be affected by the NPRM (78 FR 25662, May 2, 2013). This commenter also noted that the proposed inspection threshold and intervals can be accomplished within its planned scheduled maintenance checks, that the work-hours and elapsed time to accomplish the proposed inspections will not impact the overall span-time of the planned scheduled maintenance check, and that the proposed inspections do not require any special inspection techniques, training, or tooling.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this AD as proposed—except for minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM (78 FR 25662, May 2, 2013) for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM (78 FR 25662, May 2, 2013).

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 98 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspections	17 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$1,445 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$1,445 per inspection cycle	\$141,610 per inspection cycle.

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this AD.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: "General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

- (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),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) 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.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):



2013-15-11 The Boeing Company: Amendment 39-17527; Docket No. FAA-2013-0361; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-026-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective September 20, 2013.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 727, 727C, 727-100, 727-100C, 727-200, and 727-200F series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC)/Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 55, Stabilizers.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report of cracking in the left-side chord of the fin closure rib on the vertical stabilizer. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking and corrosion in the left- and right-side chords of the fin closure rib, which could lead to widespread cracking in the chords that might weaken the fin closure rib structure, and result in loss of airplane control due to lack of horizontal stabilizer support.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Detailed and High Frequency Eddy Current (HFEC) Inspections

Within 24 months after the effective date of this AD: Do a detailed inspection for cracking and corrosion of the left- and right-side chords of the fin closure rib, and do a HFEC inspection of the left- and right-side chords for cracking, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 727-55-0095, dated September 24, 2012. If any cracking or corrosion is found, before further flight, repair or replace the affected right- or left-side chord using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (h) of this AD. Repeat the detailed inspection and HFEC inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 26 months.

(h) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the ACO, send it to the attention of the person identified in the Related Information section of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(3) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(i) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6577; fax: 425-917-6590; email: berhane.alazar@faa.gov.

(j) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 727-55-0095, dated September 24, 2012.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P.O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(4) You may view this service information at FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on July 21, 2013.

Stephen P. Boyd,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.