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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0415; Product Identifier 2017-NM-149-AD; Amendment 39-19466; AD 2018-21-08]

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 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, -500 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by the results of a fleet survey that revealed cracking in the bulkhead frame web at a certain body station. This AD requires repetitive inspections of the bulkhead frame web at a certain station, and applicable on-condition actions. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective November 20, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of November 20, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone 562-797-1717; internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0415.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0415; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations (phone: 800-647-5527) is 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: George Garrido, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5232; fax: 562-627-5210; email: george.garrido@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all The Boeing Company Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, -500 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on May 25, 2018 (83 FR 24242). The NPRM was prompted by the results of a fleet survey that revealed cracking in the bulkhead frame web at a certain body station. The NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections of the bulkhead frame web at a certain station, and repair if necessary.

We are issuing this AD to address cracking in the station (STA) 259.5 bulkhead frame web from the first stiffener above stringer S-10 to S-13. Such cracking could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this final rule. The following presents the comments received on the NPRM and the FAA's response to each comment.

Request To Clarify Corrective Actions

Boeing requested that the Summary section and Related Service Information paragraph in the NPRM be revised to clarify that the corrective actions include more than just repairs. Boeing stated that the service information does not describe defined repairs but indicates that if any crack is found, contact Boeing for repair instructions and do the repair and repeat the instructions.

We agree with the commenter's request for the reasons provided by the commenter. We have revised the Summary section of this final rule by changing "repair if necessary" to "applicable on-condition actions." We have revised the "Related Service Information under 1 CFR part 51" paragraph of this final rule by clarifying the description of the service information to "... low frequency eddy current inspections of the STA 259.5 bulkhead frame web from the first stiffener above stringer S-10 to S-13, on the left and right sides of the airplane and applicable on-condition actions."

Request To Include Group 1 Airplanes as Specified in the Service Information

Boeing requested that Group 1 airplanes, as specified in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017, be addressed in the body of the proposed AD. Boeing stated that this change would allow operators with airplanes that are not subject to the limit of validity a means to comply with the requirements specified in the proposed AD.

We agree with the commenter's request for the reasons provided by the commenter. Group 1 airplanes are those having line numbers 1 through 291 that have accumulated flight cycles beyond the limit of validity of the maintenance program. We have revised paragraph (g) of this AD to address Group 1 airplanes, added paragraph (h) of this AD to address Group 2 and 3 airplanes, and redesignated the subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

Effect of Winglets on Accomplishment of the Proposed Actions

Aviation Partners Boeing stated that accomplishing the Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01219SE does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions specified in the NPRM.

We concur with the commenter. We have redesignated paragraph (c) of the proposed AD as (c)(1) and added paragraph (c)(2) to this AD to state that installation of STC ST01219SE does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this final rule. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01219SE is installed, a “change in product” alternative method of compliance (AMOC) approval request is not necessary to comply with the requirements of 14 CFR 39.17.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this final rule with the changes described previously and minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM for addressing the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM.

We also determined that these changes will not increase the economic burden on any operator or increase the scope of this final rule.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

We reviewed Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017. The service information describes procedures for repetitive high frequency eddy current inspections and low frequency eddy current inspections of the STA 259.5 bulkhead frame web from the first stiffener above stringer S-10 to S-13, on the left and right sides of the airplane and applicable on-condition actions. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 411 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs for Required Actions

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspections	57 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$4,845 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$4,845 per inspection cycle	\$1,991,295 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.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes and associated appliances to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

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):



AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE

www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/alerts/
www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/advanced.html

2018-21-08 The Boeing Company: Amendment 39-19466; Docket No. FAA-2018-0415; Product 2017-NM-149-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective November 20, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

(1) This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(2) Installation of Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01219SE does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01219SE is installed, a “change in product” alternative method of compliance (AMOC) approval request is not necessary to comply with the requirements of 14 CFR 39.17.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53; Fuselage.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by the results of a fleet survey that revealed cracking in the bulkhead frame web at a certain body station. We are issuing this AD to address cracking in the station (STA) 259.5 bulkhead frame web from the first stiffener above stringers S-10 to S-13. Such cracking could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Required Actions for Group 1 Airplanes

For airplanes identified as Group 1 in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017: Within 120 days after the effective date of this AD, inspect the airplane and do all applicable on-condition actions using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD.

(h) Required Actions for Group 2 and 3 Airplanes

For airplanes identified as Group 2 and 3 in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017: Except as required by paragraph (i) of this AD, at the applicable times specified in the “Compliance” paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017, do all applicable actions identified in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017.

Note 1 to paragraph (h) of this AD: Guidance for accomplishing the actions required by this AD is included in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-53A1369, dated October 12, 2017, which is referred to in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017.

(i) Exceptions to Service Information Specifications

(1) For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD: Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017, uses the phrase “the original issue date of Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369,” this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017, specifies contacting Boeing, this AD requires repair using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD.

(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 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 certification office, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-LAACO-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, modification, or alteration required by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Los Angeles ACO Branch, FAA, to make those findings. To be approved, the repair method, modification deviation, or alteration deviation must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(k) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact George Garrido, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5232; fax: 562-627-5210; email: george.garrido@faa.gov.

(l) 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 Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1369 RB, dated October 12, 2017.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone 562-797-1717; internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(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 Des Moines, Washington, on September 20, 2018.

John P. Piccola,
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.