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DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
DOCKETS

2004 SEP 16 P 12: 56

1 of 1 DOCUMENT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

14 CFR Part 39

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737 Series Airplanes

[Docket No. 87-NM-155-AD, Amdt. 39-5890]

53 FR 18077

May 20, 1988

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment supersedes an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Boeing Model 737 series airplanes, which currently requires structural inspection and repair, as necessary, of the forward lower cargo doorway frames. This amendment requires continued inspection and repair, as necessary, of the forward lower cargo doorway frames, in addition to the replacement of certain repair parts previously installed in accordance with the existing AD. This action is prompted by reports that certain frame angles, used as an alternate repair method, are subject to cracking during installation. Continued operation with undetected cracked frames could result in skin cracks and eventual rapid decompression of the airplane.

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 27, 1988.

ADDRESSES: The applicable service information may be obtained from the Boeing Commercial Airplane Company, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124. This information may be examined at the FAA, Northwest Mountain Region, 17900 Pacific Highway South, Seattle, Washington, or the Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 9010 East Marginal Way South, Seattle, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Barbara J. Baillie, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S; telephone 431-1927. Mailing address: FAA, Northwest Mountain Region, 17900 Pacific Highway South, C-68966, Seattle, Washington 98168.

TEXT: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend Part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations by superseding AD 86-09-06, Amendment 39-5307 (51 FR 17324; May 12, 1986), to require structural inspection and repair, as necessary, of the forward lower cargo doorway frames on certain Boeing Model 737 series airplanes, was published in the Federal Register on December 17, 1987 (52 FR 47945).

Interested persons have been afforded the opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the single comment received.

The Air Transport Association (ATA) of America, commenting on behalf of one member airline, requested that inspection for cracks and replacement, as necessary, be allowed in lieu of mandatory replacement of repair angles, as would be required by paragraph D. of the proposed AD. The FAA does not concur with this request. It has been determined that certain repair angles used as a means of complying with the existing AD were made from a brittle material which cracked during or shortly after installation. This material is, therefore, inadequate and unacceptable for its intended use, and the FAA has determined that it must be removed from the airplane. However, as provided in

Related AD

paragraph I. of this final rule, individual operators may choose to request approval for alternate means of compliance which provides an acceptable level of safety.

Additionally, the final rule has been revised to remove all references to the use of "later FAA-approved revisions of the applicable service bulletin," in order to be consistent with FAA policy in that regard. The FAA has determined that this change will not increase the economic burden on any operator, nor will it increase the scope of the AD, since later revisions of the service bulletin may be approved as an alternate means of compliance with this AD, as provided in paragraph I.

After careful review of the available data, including the comment noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the following rule.

It is estimated that 186 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD. (However, it is expected that only a few airplanes will require rework as a result of this action.) It will take approximately 350 hours per airplane to accomplish the required work, the average labor cost will be \$40 per hour, and parts will be \$2,200. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$16,200 per airplane.

The regulations set forth in this amendment are promulgated pursuant to the authority in the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, as amended (*49 U.S.C. 1301, et seq.*), which statute is construed to preempt state law regulating the same subject. Thus, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that such regulations do not have federalism implications warranting the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, the FAA has determined that this regulation is not considered to be major under Executive Order 12291 or significant under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (*44 FR 11034*; February 26, 1979); and it is further certified under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act that this rule will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities because few, if any, Boeing Model 737 airplanes are operated by small entities. A final evaluation prepared for this regulation has been placed in the docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Aviation safety, Aircraft.
Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends § 39.13 of Part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 39.13) as follows:

PART 39 -- [AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for Part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: *49 U.S.C. 1354(a)*, 1421 and 1423; *49 U.S.C. 106(g)* (Revised Pub. L. 97-449, January 12, 1983); and 14 CFR 11.89.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. By superseding AD 86-09-06, Amendment 39-5307 (*51 FR 17324*; May 12, 1986), with the following new airworthiness directive:

Boeing: Applies to Model 737 series airplanes listed in Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 4, dated July 30, 1987, certificated in any category. Compliance required as indicated, unless previously accomplished.

To prevent rapid loss of cabin pressure resulting from undetected frame cracking, accomplish the following:

A. Prior to the accumulation of 6,000 landings after June 16, 1986, visually inspect the forward and aft body frames adjacent to the forward lower cargo door for cracks, in accordance with Flight Safety Inspection Program in Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 3, dated July 12, 1985. Repeat the inspections at intervals not to exceed 4,000 landings.

B. After the effective date of this AD, if cracks are found, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with Part III.A. or Part III.B., as applicable, of Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 4, dated July 30, 1987.

C. For airplanes that have had cracks repaired in accordance with Part III.A. of Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, initial release, dated June 16, 1978, or later FAA-approved revisions: Prior to the accumulation of 25,000 landings after the repair, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 17,000 landings, visually inspect the frames for cracks

in the area of the repair in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 3. Parts found cracked must be repaired prior to further flight in accordance with an FAA-approved repair method.

D. For airplanes that have had cracks repaired in accordance with Part III.B. of Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 3: Prior to the accumulation of 3,000 landings after effective date of this AD, replace the repair parts with new airworthy repair parts in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 4.

E. For airplanes that have had cracks repaired in accordance with the Boeing Model 737 Structural Repair Manual, Section 51-40-3, or with Part III.B. of Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 4, or later FAA-approved revisions, or in accordance with paragraph D., above: Prior to the accumulation of 6,000 landings after the repair and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 4,000 landings, visually inspect the frames for cracks in the area of the repair in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 4. Parts found cracked must be repaired prior to further flight, in accordance with an FAA-approved repair method.

F. Modification of uncracked frames in accordance with the Preventative Modification of Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53-1051, Revision 3, dated July 12, 1985, constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

G. Airplanes with cracked frames may be flown unpressurized in accordance with FAR 21.197 and 21.199 to a maintenance base for repairs or replacement required by this AD.

H. For the purposes of complying with this AD, subject to acceptance by the assigned FAA Maintenance Inspector, the number of landings may be determined by dividing each airplane's number of hours time in service by the operator's fleet average time from takeoff to landing for the airplane type.

I. An alternate means of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time, which provide an acceptable level of safety and which has the concurrence of an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, may be used when approved by the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, FAA Northwest Mountain Region.

All persons affected by this directive who have not already received the appropriate service documents from the manufacturer may obtain copies upon request to the Boeing Commercial Airplane Company, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124. These documents may be examined at the FAA, Northwest Mountain Region, 17900 Pacific Highway South, Seattle, Washington, or the Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 9010 East Marginal Way South, Seattle, Washington.

This amendment supersedes AD 86-09-06, Amendment 39-5307.

This amendment becomes effective June 27, 1988.

Issued in Seattle, Washington, on May 10, 1988.

Frederick M. Isaac,

Acting Director, Northwest Mountain Region.

[FR Doc. 88-11310 Filed 5-19-88; 8:45 am]

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