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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains regulatory documents having general applicability and legal effect, most of which are keyed to and codified in the Code of Federal Regulations, which is published under 50 titles pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 1510.

The Code of Federal Regulations is sold by the Superintendent of Documents.

FEDERAL RETIREMENT THRIFT INVESTMENT BOARD

5 CFR Part 1653

Tax Withholding on Court Ordered Payments

AGENCY: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

ACTION: Direct final rule.

SUMMARY: This rule deletes regulatory language that provides for the Federal income tax withholding rates on court ordered payments from the Thrift Savings Plan.

DATES: This rule is effective without further action on October 22, 2018, unless significant adverse comment is received by October 15, 2018. If significant adverse comment is received, the FRTIB will publish a timely withdrawal of the rule in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments using one of the following methods:

- *Federal Rulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Mail:* Office of General Counsel, Attn: Megan G. Grumbine, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, 77 K Street NE, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20002.
- *Hand Delivery/Courier:* The address for sending comments by hand delivery or courier is the same as that for submitting comments by mail.
- *Facsimile:* Comments may be submitted by facsimile at (202) 942-1676.

The most helpful comments explain the reason for any recommended change and include data, information, and the authority that supports the recommended change.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laurissa Stokes at (202) 942-1645.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FRTIB administers the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), which was established by the Federal Employees' Retirement

System Act of 1986 (FERSA), Public Law 99-335, 100 Stat. 514. The TSP provisions of FERSA are codified, as amended, largely at 5 U.S.C. 8351 and 8401-79. The TSP is a tax-deferred retirement savings plan for Federal civilian employees and members of the uniformed services. The TSP is similar to cash or deferred arrangements established for private-sector employees under section 401(k) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 401(k)).

Currently, paragraph (e) of 5 CFR 1635.5 specifies the person to whom a court ordered payment from the TSP may be made and, in addition, specifies the Federal income tax withholding rates on such payments. This rule deletes the language that specifies the Federal income tax withholding rates on court ordered TSP payments.

The Federal income tax withholding rates on all TSP payments are dictated by the Internal Revenue Code. As such, any FRTIB regulatory language that expresses the withholding rates are, at best, duplicative of the Internal Revenue Code. The Federal income tax withholding rates required by the Internal Revenue Code are more appropriately communicated to participants and beneficiaries via the TSP website or via forms and publications provided directly to them.

Type of Rulemaking

In a direct final rulemaking, an agency publishes a direct final rule in the **Federal Register** along with a statement that the rule will become effective unless the agency receives significant adverse comment within a specified period. The FRTIB is using a direct final rule for this rulemaking because it expects this regulation to be noncontroversial. The FRTIB will withdraw the rule if it receives significant adverse comment. Comments that are not adverse may be considered for modifications to part 1653 at a future date. If no significant adverse comment is received, the rule will become effective without additional action.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

I certify that this regulation will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. This regulation will affect Federal employees and members of the uniformed services who participate in the Thrift Savings Plan, which is a Federal defined contribution retirement

savings plan created under the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986 (FERSA), Public Law 99-335, 100 Stat. 514, and which is administered by the FRTIB.

Paperwork Reduction Act

I certify that these regulations do not require additional reporting under the criteria of the Paperwork Reduction Act.

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995

Pursuant to the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, 2 U.S.C. 602, 632, 653, 1501-1571, the effects of this regulation on state, local, and tribal governments and the private sector have been assessed. This regulation will not compel the expenditure in any one year of \$100 million or more by state, local, and tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector. Therefore, a statement under section 1532 is not required.

Submission to Congress and the General Accounting Office

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 810(a)(1)(A), the Agency submitted a report containing this rule and other required information to the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Comptroller General of the United States before publication of this rule in the **Federal Register**. This rule is not a major rule as defined at 5 U.S.C. 814(2).

List of Subjects in 5 CFR Part 1653

Alimony, Child support, Government employees, Pensions, Retirement.

Ravindra Deo,

Executive Director, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

For the reasons stated in the preamble, the Agency amends 5 CFR chapter VI as follows:

PART 1653—COURT ORDERS AND LEGAL PROCESSES AFFECTING THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN ACCOUNTS

- 1. The authority citation for part 1653 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 8432d, 8435, 8436(b), 8437(e), 8439(a)(3), 8467, 8474(b)(5) and 8474(c)(1).

- 2. Amend § 1653.5 by revising paragraph (e) to read as follows:

§ 1653.5 Payment.

* * * * *

(e) Payment will be made only to the person or persons specified in the court order. However, if the court order specifies a third-party mailing address for the payment, the TSP will mail to the address specified any portion of the payment that is not transferred to a traditional IRA, Roth IRA, or eligible employer plan.

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[FR Doc. 2018–20471 Filed 9–19–18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 25

[Docket No.: FAA–2014–1027; Amdt. No. 25–146]

RIN 2120–AK24

Transport Airplane Fuel Tank and System Lightning Protection

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is amending certain airworthiness regulations for transport category airplanes regarding lightning protection of fuel systems. This action is relieving in several ways. It removes the requirement for manufacturers to provide triple-redundant fault tolerance in lightning protection. It removes regulatory inconsistency by establishing a single standard for lightning protection of both fuel tank structure and fuel tank systems. It establishes a performance-based standard that the design and installation of fuel systems prevent catastrophic fuel vapor ignition caused by lightning and its effects. This performance-based standard allows applicants to choose how to provide the required level of safety. This action requires airworthiness limitations to preclude the degradation of design features that prevent catastrophic fuel vapor ignition caused by lightning. Its intended effects are to align airworthiness standards with industry's and the FAA's understanding of lightning, and to address issues of inconsistency and impracticality that applicants experienced with previous lightning protection regulations.

DATES: Effective November 19, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For information on where to obtain copies of rulemaking documents and other information related to this final rule, see “How To Obtain Additional Information” in the

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions concerning this action, contact Stephen Slotte, Airplane and Flight Crew Interface Section, AIR–671, Transport Standards Branch, Policy and Innovation Division, Aircraft Certification Service, Federal Aviation Administration, 2200 South 216th Street, Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax (206) 231–3163; email steve.slotte@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority for This Rulemaking

The FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety is found in Title 49 of the United States Code. 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.

This rulemaking is promulgated under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701, “General Requirements.” Under that section, the FAA is charged with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations and minimum standards for the design and performance of aircraft that the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority. It prescribes revised safety standards for the design and operation of transport category airplanes.

I. Overview of Final Rule

The FAA is amending the airworthiness regulations in title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 25 related to the lightning protection of fuel systems¹ (including fuel tank structure² and fuel tank systems³). This amendment removes the requirement for prevention of lightning ignition sources from § 25.981(a)(3), “Fuel tank ignition prevention,” at amendment 25–102 and modifies § 25.954, “Fuel system lightning protection.” The modification to § 25.954 creates a performance-based standard that provides definitions for “critical lightning strike” and “fuel systems;” requires catastrophic fuel vapor ignition due to lightning and its

¹ Fuel system, in the context of this final rule, includes any component within either the fuel tank structure or the fuel tank systems and any airplane structure or system components that penetrate, connect to, or are located within a fuel tank.

² Fuel tank structure, in the context of this final rule, includes structural members of the fuel tank such as airplane skins, access panels, joints, ribs, spars, stringers, and associated fasteners, brackets, coatings, and sealant.

³ Fuel tank systems, or systems, in the context of this final rule, include tubing, components, and wiring that penetrate, connect to, or are located within a fuel tank.

effects to be extremely improbable; and requires applicants to add airworthiness limitations to the airplane's Instructions for Continued Airworthiness (ICA) to prevent catastrophic fuel vapor ignition caused by lightning. These changes align the rule with the current understanding of lightning-related risk, fuel tank flammability exposure, and current airplane design practices. It also revises the title of § 25.981 to “Fuel tank explosion prevention.”

This amendment removes lightning from the ignition sources regulated by § 25.981(a)(3). Inclusion of lightning in that section has resulted in applicants showing that compliance was impractical, leading them to seek exemptions to compliance with § 25.981 for fuel tank structure and systems. The FAA has granted several exemptions for fuel tank structure and systems. The FAA agrees, however, with the Large Airplane Fuel System Lightning Protection Aviation Rulemaking Committee (Lightning ARC)⁴ that common regulatory treatment of structure- and systems-related lightning protection in the fuel system is appropriate. Applicants have also requested that the FAA develop special conditions to allow the consideration of fuel tank flammability and the probability of lightning strikes when meeting the requirement that a fuel tank explosion caused by lightning be extremely improbable. This amendment removes the necessity for such special conditions by incorporating such considerations into the rule.

To maintain the integrity of lightning protection features of airplanes, this amendment adds a new paragraph (d) to § 25.954 and amends part 25, appendix H, section H25.4(a) to require applicants to establish airworthiness limitations to protect the continued function of the lightning protection features of fuel tank structure and fuel systems.

This rule applies to applications for new type certificates, and applications for amended or supplemental type certificates on significant product-level change projects in which § 25.954, “Fuel system lightning protection,” is applicable to the changed area.

II. Background

A. Statement of the Problem

Section 25.954, adopted in 1967, required protection of the airplane from the effects of lightning, regardless of the likelihood that lightning would strike the airplane. The regulation did not acknowledge that lightning protection

⁴ See the “Large Airplane Fuel System Lightning Protection Rulemaking Recommendations” report, May 2011, available in the docket.