

inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC):* For any service information referenced in EASA AD 2018-0245R1 that contains RC procedures and tests: Except as required by paragraph (h)(2) of this AD, RC procedures and tests must be done to comply with this AD; any procedures or tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

(k) Related Information

(1) For information about EASA AD 2018-0245R1, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 6017; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this EASA AD 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. EASA AD 2018-0245R1 may be found in the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0016.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Kathleen Arrigotti, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3218.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on February 1, 2019.

Michael Kaszycki,

Acting Director, System Oversight Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2019-02931 Filed 2-21-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2019-0022; Product Identifier 2018-NM-162-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain The Boeing Company Model 737-200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports of cracking in the lower lobe skin panel assemblies of the fuselage. This proposed AD would require replacement of lower lobe skin panel assemblies, and detailed inspections for scribe lines and applicable on-condition actions. We are proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by April 8, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202-493-2251.
- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this NPRM, 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 referenced 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-2019-0022.

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-2019-0022; 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 NPRM, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (phone: 800-647-5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

James Guo, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5357; fax: 562-627-5210; email: james.guo@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include "Docket No. FAA-2019-0022; Product Identifier 2018-NM-162-AD" at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this NPRM. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this NPRM because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

Fatigue damage can occur locally, in small areas or structural design details, or globally, in widespread areas. Multiple-site damage is widespread damage that occurs in a large structural element such as a single rivet line of a lap splice joining two large skin panels. Widespread damage can also occur in multiple elements such as adjacent frames or stringers. Multiple-site damage and multiple-element damage cracks are typically too small initially to be reliably detected with normal inspection methods. Without intervention, these cracks will grow, and eventually compromise the structural integrity of the airplane. This condition is known as widespread fatigue damage (WFD). It is associated

with general degradation of large areas of structure with similar structural details and stress levels. As an airplane ages, WFD will likely occur, and will certainly occur if the airplane is operated long enough without any intervention.

The FAA’s WFD final rule (75 FR 69746, November 15, 2010) became effective on January 14, 2011. The WFD rule requires certain actions to prevent structural failure due to WFD throughout the operational life of certain existing transport category airplanes and all of these airplanes that will be certificated in the future. For existing and future airplanes subject to the WFD rule, the rule requires that DAHs establish a limit of validity (LOV) of the engineering data that support the structural maintenance program. Operators affected by the WFD rule may not fly an airplane beyond its LOV, unless an extended LOV is approved.

The WFD rule (75 FR 69746, November 15, 2010) does not require identifying and developing maintenance actions if the DAHs can show that such actions are not necessary to prevent WFD before the airplane reaches the LOV. Many LOVs, however, do depend on accomplishment of future maintenance actions. As stated in the WFD rule, any maintenance actions necessary to reach the LOV will be mandated by airworthiness directives through separate rulemaking actions.

In the context of WFD, this action is necessary to enable DAHs to propose LOVs that allow operators the longest operational lives for their airplanes, and still ensure that WFD will not occur. This approach allows for an implementation strategy that provides flexibility to DAHs in determining the timing of service information development (with FAA approval), while providing operators with certainty regarding the LOV applicable to their airplanes.

We have received a report indicating that an operator of a 737-300 airplane reported a chem-milled step crack above stringer S-15 on the left side between station (STA) 360 and STA 380. The

airplane had a lap splice modification done in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 737-53A1177 and had logged 48,537 total flight cycles and 67,505 total flight hours. The 5-inch crack was found by visual inspection during airplane maintenance. On these skin panel assemblies, the bonded doubler is chemically milled to create pockets. At these locations, the loads could cause a condition where cracks could form along the longitudinal edges of the doubler at the step of the chem-milled pockets. Without skin panel assembly replacement, the skin cracks could grow and multiple adjacent cracks in the fuselage skin could link up with each other. This condition, if not addressed, could lead to decompression or loss of structural integrity of the airplane.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

We reviewed Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018. The service information describes procedures for replacement of lower lobe skin panel assemblies, and detailed inspections for scribe lines 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.

FAA’s Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions identified in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018, described previously, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD.

For information on the procedures and compliance times, see this service information at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0022.

Explanation of Requirements Bulletin

The FAA worked in conjunction with industry, under the Airworthiness Directive Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee (AD ARC), to enhance the AD system. One enhancement is a process for annotating which steps in the service information are “required for compliance” (RC) with an AD. Boeing has implemented this RC concept into Boeing service bulletins.

In an effort to further improve the quality of ADs and AD-related Boeing service information, a joint process improvement initiative was worked between the FAA and Boeing. The initiative resulted in the development of a new process in which the service information more clearly identifies the actions needed to address the unsafe condition in the “Accomplishment Instructions.” The new process results in a Boeing Requirements Bulletin, which contains only the actions needed to address the unsafe condition (*i.e.*, only the RC actions).

Explanation of Compliance Time

The compliance time for the modification specified in this proposed AD for addressing WFD was established to ensure that discrepant structure is replaced before WFD develops in airplanes. Standard inspection techniques cannot be relied on to detect WFD before it becomes a hazard to flight. We will not grant any extensions of the compliance time to complete any AD-mandated service bulletin related to WFD without extensive new data that would substantiate and clearly warrant such an extension.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 171 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

ESTIMATED COSTS FOR REQUIRED ACTIONS *

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspection and replacement	688 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$58,480.	(*)	\$58,480	\$10,000,080

* Parts cost unavailable.

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

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify 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),
- (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.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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):

The Boeing Company: Docket No. FAA–2019–0022; Product Identifier 2018–NM–162–AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by April 8, 2019.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 737–200, –200C, –300, –400, and –500 airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737–53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of cracking in the lower lobe skin panel assemblies of the fuselage. We are issuing this AD to address the possibility of multiple adjacent cracks at chem-milled steps in the fuselage skin linking up with each other, which could lead to decompression or loss of structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Required Actions

Except as specified by paragraph (h) of this AD: At the applicable times specified in the "Compliance" paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737–53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018, do all applicable actions identified in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737–53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018.

Note 1 to paragraph (g) of this AD: Guidance for accomplishing the actions

required by this AD can be found in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737–53A1379, dated September 4, 2018, which is referred to in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737–53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018.

(h) Exceptions to Service Information Specifications

(1) For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD: Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737–53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018, uses the phrase "the original issue date of Requirements Bulletin 737–53A1379 RB," this AD requires using "the effective date of this AD."

(2) Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737–53A1379 RB, dated September 4, 2018, specifies contacting Boeing for work instructions or for scribe line repair and skin panel replacement work instructions: This AD requires doing the work and the scribe line repair and skin panel replacement before further flight using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i) of this AD.

(i) 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 (j)(1) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-LAACO-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.

(j) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact James Guo, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712–4137; phone: 562–627–5357; fax: 562–627–5210; email: james.guo@faa.gov.

(2) 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>. You may view this referenced 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.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on February 8, 2019.

Michael Kaszycki,

Acting Director, System Oversight Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2019-02923 Filed 2-21-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2019-0018; Product Identifier 2018-NM-116-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2016-07-12, which applies to certain Airbus SAS Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. AD 2016-07-12 requires repetitive inspections for damage and cracking of the aft fixed fairing (AFF) of the pylons, and repair if necessary. Since we issued AD 2016-07-12, we have received reports of cracks on a certain rib of a modified AFF of the pylons. This proposed AD would retain the repetitive inspections required by AD 2016-07-12, and require additional repetitive inspections at the upper spar at a certain rib area and corrective actions if necessary. We are proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by April 8, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- *Fax:* 202-493-2251.

- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For the incorporation by reference (IBR) material described in the “Related IBR material under 1 CFR part 51” section in **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 1000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this IBR material 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 in the AD docket on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

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-2019-0018; 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 NPRM, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3223.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2019-0018; Product Identifier 2018-NM-116-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this NPRM. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this NPRM based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this NPRM.

Discussion

We issued AD 2016-07-12, Amendment 39-18457 (81 FR 19482, April 5, 2016) (“AD 2016-07-12”), for certain Airbus SAS Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. AD 2016-07-12 requires repetitive inspections for damage and cracking of the AFF of the pylons, and repair if necessary. AD 2016-07-12 resulted from reports of cracking of the AFF of the pylons due to fatigue damage of the structure. We issued AD 2016-07-12 to address such damage and cracking of the AFF of the pylons, which could result in detachment of a pylon and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

Actions Since AD 2016-07-12 Was Issued

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2018-0137, dated June 28, 2018 (“EASA AD 2018-0137”) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A318-111, -112; Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216; and Model A321-111, -112, -211, -212, -213 airplanes. The MCAI states:

On aeroplanes equipped with post-mod 33844 CFM pylons, several operators reported finding cracks on the Aft Fixed Fairing (AFF). After material analysis, it appeared that the pylon AFF structure, especially on this configuration, was subject to fatigue-induced damage which could lead to pylon AFF cracks.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to detachment of a pylon AFF from the aeroplane, possibly resulting in injury to persons on the ground.

To address this unsafe condition, Airbus published Alert Operators Transmission (AOT) A54N002-12, providing inspection instructions. Thereafter, Airbus issued Service Bulletin (SB) A320-54-1027, later revised, superseding AOT A54N002-12. EASA issued AD 2014-0154 [which corresponds to FAA AD 2016-07-12] to require repetitive inspections of the pylon AFF and, depending on findings, replacement.

Since that [EASA] AD was issued, Airbus developed mod 156593 to increase the fatigue life of the pylon AFF structure by using a different material and introducing thermal treatment of the aluminium sheets parts. Prompted by new findings of cracks on rib 15, it was determined that this area also needs to be inspected to ensure the structural integrity of the new pylon AFF. Airbus further revised SB A320-54-1027, including instructions for repetitive inspection of that area. Repetitive inspections are also required on post-mod 156593 aeroplanes.