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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2017-0776; Product Identifier 2017-NM-062-AD; Amendment 39-19264; AD 2018-09-08]

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 certain The Boeing Company Model 737-200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by reports of cracks in the frame web common to the stringer ties adjacent to the air-conditioning support brackets. This AD requires an inspection of the frame for any air-conditioning bracket assembly or intercostal, and, depending on the results, repetitive inspections of the frame web for cracking of certain locations, and applicable on-condition actions. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective June 8, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of June 8, 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 Street, 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-2017-0776.

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-2017-0776; 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 Docket Operations, 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 certain The Boeing Company Model 737-200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on August 15, 2017 (82 FR 38623). The NPRM was prompted by reports of cracks in the frame web common to the stringer ties adjacent to the air-conditioning support brackets. The NPRM proposed to require an inspection for any air-conditioning bracket assembly or intercostal, and, depending on the results, repetitive inspections for cracking of certain locations, and applicable on-condition actions.

We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks in the frame web common to the stringer ties adjacent to the air-conditioning support brackets, which could result in a severed frame, and, in combination with potential multiple site damage (MSD) at the stringer S-10 lap splice or chem-milled skin cracks, could result in possible rapid decompression and loss of 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.

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 actions specified in the NPRM.

We concur with the commenter. We have redesignated paragraph (c) of the proposed AD as paragraph (c)(1) of this AD 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 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.

Request for Clarification of the Unsafe Condition and Inspection Area

Boeing requested that we revise the preamble of the NPRM and paragraph (e) of the proposed AD to clarify the unsafe condition. Boeing also requested that we revise paragraph (i) of the proposed AD to clarify the type of cracking (frame web cracking) and the inspection area (frame web common to the stringer ties). The commenter mentioned that without these clarifications the specific wording could be misleading.

We agree that clarification is necessary for the reasons provided by the commenter and have revised this AD accordingly.

Request To Update Responsible ACO Branch

Boeing requested that we change all references to the Seattle ACO Branch to refer to the Los Angeles ACO Branch. Boeing pointed out that responsibility for The Boeing Company Model 737-200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes has changed to the Los Angeles ACO Branch.

We agree for the reasons provided by the commenter and have revised this AD accordingly.

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 Service Bulletin 737-53A1363, dated April 7, 2017. This service information describes procedures for an inspection of the frame for any air-conditioning bracket assembly or intercostal, repetitive inspections of the frame web for cracking of certain locations, 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 302 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	27 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$2,295 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$2,295 per inspection cycle	\$693,090 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):



FAA
Aviation Safety

AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE

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

2018-09-08 The Boeing Company: Amendment 39-19264; Docket No. FAA-2017-0776; Product Identifier 2017-NM-062-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective June 8, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

(1) This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 737-200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-53A1363, dated April 7, 2017.

(2) Installation of Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01219SE (http://rgl.faa.gov/Regulatory_and_Guidance_Library/rgstc.nsf/0/EBD1CEC7B301293E86257CB30045557A?OpenDocument&Highlight=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 reports of cracks in the frame web common to the stringer ties adjacent to the air-conditioning support brackets. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks in the frame web common to the stringer ties adjacent to the air-conditioning support brackets, which could result in a severed frame, and, in combination with potential multiple site damage (MSD) at the stringer S-10 lap splice or chem-milled skin cracks, could result in possible rapid decompression and 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 required by paragraph (h) of this AD: At the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-53A1363, dated April 7, 2017, do all

applicable actions identified as “RC” (required for compliance) in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-53A1363, dated April 7, 2017.

(h) Exceptions to Service Information Specifications

(1) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-53A1363, dated April 7, 2017, uses the phrase “after the original issue date of this service bulletin,” for purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD, the phrase “after the effective date of this AD” applies.

(2) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-53A1363, dated April 7, 2017, specifies contacting Boeing, and specifies that action as RC: This AD requires using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD.

(i) Terminating Action for Repetitive Inspections

Accomplishment of a reinforcement repair for a frame web crack at the stringer tie location using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD terminates the repetitive inspections required by paragraph (g) of this AD for the repaired stringer tie location only, provided the crack is removed or trimmed out from the stringer tie holes.

(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-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, 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.

(4) Except as required by paragraph (h)(2) of this AD: For service information that contains steps that are labeled as RC, the provisions of paragraphs (j)(4)(i) and (j)(4)(ii) of this AD apply.

(i) The steps labeled as RC, including substeps under an RC step and any figures identified in an RC step, must be done to comply with the AD. If a step or substep is labeled “RC Exempt,” then the RC requirement is removed from that step or substep. An AMOC is required for any deviations to RC steps, including substeps and identified figures.

(ii) Steps not labeled 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 RC steps, including substeps and identified figures, can still be done as specified, and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition.

(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.

(I) 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 Service Bulletin 737-53A1363, dated April 7, 2017.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For Boeing 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 Street, 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 April 20, 2018.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.