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James E. Jackson,

*Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate,
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 99-NM-21-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-100, -200, and -200C Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation
Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking
(NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Boeing Model 737-100, -200, and -200C series airplanes. This proposal would require inspections to detect corrosion and cracking of the inboard track of each outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar, and repair, if necessary. For certain airplanes, this proposal also provides for optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections required for those airplanes. This proposal is prompted by several reports of cracking of the inboard track of the outboard flap. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect and correct corrosion and cracking of the inboard track of the outboard flap, which could result in loss of the outboard trailing edge flap and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by June 10, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99-NM-21-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport

Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rick Kawaguchi, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-1153; fax (425) 227-1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 99-NM-21-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99-NM-21-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports indicating that cracking of the inboard track of the outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar has been found on several airplanes. Such cracking has been attributed to stress corrosion. Corrosion in that area can be accelerated if a phenolic rub strip is installed at the interface between the flap track and wing skin. (The rub strip is intended to protect the surface of the

wing skin from abrasion.) The phenolic rub strip may draw moisture into the interface, which could result in corrosion. Also, inadequate clamp-up of the attachment bolts can make the area where the flap track attaches to the rear spar more vulnerable to moisture absorption and, consequently, to corrosion. Such corrosion, if not corrected, could result in cracking of the inboard flap track, which could result in loss of the outboard trailing edge flap and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Service Bulletin 737-57-1065, Revision 3, dated December 17, 1982. That service bulletin describes, among other things, procedures for a preventive modification of the interface between the inboard track of the outboard flap and the rear spar. The modification involves replacing the existing rub strip with an aluminum rub strip; replacing the existing shim, if necessary; and replacing certain attachment bolts with new attachment bolts. Accomplishment of the modification specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other products of this same type design, the proposed AD would require, for certain airplanes, repetitive visual inspections to detect corrosion, and repetitive high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections to detect cracking, of the inboard track of each outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar, and repair, if necessary. For certain other airplanes, the proposed AD would require a one-time visual inspection to detect corrosion, and a one-time HFEC inspection to detect cracking, of the inboard track of each outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar, and repair, if necessary. The HFEC inspections would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the Boeing 737 Nondestructive Test Manual.

For certain airplanes, the proposed AD also provides an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirement. This action would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

Differences Between the Service Bulletin and the Proposed AD

Boeing Service Bulletin 737-57-1065, Revision 3, describes visual inspections of the outboard flap to detect looseness, gaps, and missing or damaged rub strips and shims. Operators should note that the proposed AD would not require these inspections. This decision is based on the fact that the intent of this proposed AD is to detect and correct corrosion and cracking of the inboard track of the outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar. The FAA finds that the visual inspections described in the service bulletin were not intended to detect corrosion or cracks, and therefore may not ensure that any corrosion or cracking is detected in a timely manner. Therefore, this proposed AD would require repetitive visual inspections to detect corrosion, and repetitive HFEC inspections to detect cracking, of the inboard track of each outboard flap in order to ensure that any corrosion cracking is detected in a timely manner.

In addition, the service bulletin describes a one-time visual inspection to determine if the inboard attachment bolt holes are aligned properly. Operators should note that this proposed AD does not require that inspection because the FAA finds that it is not relevant to detection of cracks.

Operators also should note that, although the actions described in the service bulletin are specified for both the inboard and outboard tracks of each outboard flap, this proposed AD is applicable only to the inboard track of each outboard flap. This decision is based upon the fact that the inboard track of the outboard flap is more heavily loaded than the outboard track, and corrosion cracking has been reported only on the inboard track.

Operators also should note that the effectivity listing of the service bulletin specifies only Boeing Model 737 series airplanes having line numbers (L/N) 1 through 869 inclusive. This AD is applicable to Boeing Model 737-100, -200, and -200C series airplanes having L/N's 1 through 869 inclusive; as well as Boeing Model 737-100, -200, and -200C series airplanes having L/N's 870 through 1585 inclusive, on which the #2 or #7 flap track has been replaced with a part having certain Boeing part numbers. The subject flap tracks may have been removed from an airplane having a L/N 1 through 869 and re-installed, without being inspected, on another airplane having a L/N 870 through 1585. Therefore, to ensure that cracking on the subject flap tracks is detected in a timely manner, the FAA

finds it necessary to expand the applicability of this AD by mandating one-time inspections of airplanes with L/N's 870 through 1585 inclusive on which certain flap tracks have been installed.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 1,020 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 394 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

It would take approximately 16 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspections, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$378,240, or \$960 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Should an operator elect to accomplish the optional terminating action that would be provided by this AD action, it would take approximately 96 work hours to accomplish it, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. The cost of required parts would be approximately \$548 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the optional terminating action would be \$6,308 per airplane.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that 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); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the

location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Boeing: Docket 99-NM-21-AD.

Applicability: Model 737-100, -200, and -200C series airplanes, line numbers (L/N) 1 through 869 inclusive; and Model 737-100, -200, and -200C series airplanes, L/N 870 through 1585 inclusive, on which the #2 or #7 flap track has been replaced with a part having a part number (P/N) listed in Table 1 of this AD; certificated in any category.

TABLE 1.—BOEING FLAP TRACKS
SUBJECT TO THIS AD

Name	Part No.
Boeing	65-67158-2 65-67158-3 65-46428-2 65-46428-3 65-46428-5 65-46428-7 65-46428-9 65-46428-11 65-46428-15 65-46428-17 65-46428-19 65-46428-21 65-46428-23 65-46428-25 65-46428-27 65-46428-33

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (f) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been

eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To detect and correct corrosion or cracking of the inboard track of each outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar, which could result in loss of the outboard trailing edge flap and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Inspections

(a) Within 18 months after the effective date of this AD, accomplish the requirements of paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this AD.

(1) Perform a detailed visual inspection to detect corrosion on the surface and edges of the inboard track of each outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar.

(2) Perform a high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection to detect cracking on the surface and edges of the inboard track of each outboard flap where the track attaches to the rear spar, in accordance with Subject 51-00-00, Figure 13, of the Boeing 737 Nondestructive Test (NDT) Manual (Boeing Document D6-37239); and remove the attachment bolts and perform an open-hole HFEC inspection of the bolt holes for cracking, in accordance with Subject 51-00-00, Figure 2 or 19, of the Boeing 737 NDT Manual.

(b) For airplanes having L/N 1 through 869 inclusive, on which no corrosion or cracking is detected during the inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD: Prior to further flight, re-install the attachment bolts. Repeat both inspections thereafter at intervals not to exceed 18 months.

(c) For airplanes having L/N 870 through 1585 inclusive, on which replacement flap tracks are installed, and on which no corrosion or cracking is detected during the inspections required by paragraph (a) of this AD: No further action is required by this AD.

Repair

(d) If any corrosion or cracking is detected during any inspection required by paragraph (a) or (b) of this AD, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate; or in accordance with data meeting the type certification basis of the airplane approved by a Boeing Company Designated Engineering Representative who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make such findings. For a repair method to be approved, as required by this paragraph, the approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

Optional Terminating Action

(e) Modification of the interface between the inboard track of each outboard flap and the rear spar in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 737-57-1065, Revision 3, dated December 17, 1982, constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirement of paragraph (b) of this AD.

Alternative Methods Of Compliance

(f) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that

provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Seattle ACO. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Seattle ACO.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Seattle ACO.

Special Flight Permits

(g) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 20, 1999.

D. L. Riggan,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 99-10347 Filed 4-23-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-133-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: This document revises an earlier proposed airworthiness directive (AD), which would have superseded an existing AD that is applicable to certain Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. The existing AD currently requires an inspection of reworked aileron/elevator power control units (PCU's) and rudder PCU's to determine if reworked PCU manifold cylinder bores containing chrome plating are installed, and replacement of the cylinder bores with bores that have been reworked using the oversize method or the steel sleeve method, if necessary. This action, among other items, revises the previously proposed rule by expanding the applicability of the existing AD to include airplanes equipped with certain rudder PCU's. The actions specified by this new proposed AD are intended to prevent a reduced rate of movement of the elevator, aileron, or rudder due to

contamination of hydraulic fluid from chrome plating chips; such reduced rate of movement, if not corrected, could result in reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 21, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-133-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207.

This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Don Kurle, Senior Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2798; fax (425) 227-1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

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