classes of securities? If so, under what circumstances? How should any such stock be treated in a conversion of the MHC to stock form?

(4) The OTS is the sole chartering authority for MHCs that are subject to part 575. Since both the parent MHC and the savings association subsidiary of an intermediate holding company are chartered by the OTS as special limited purpose corporations, to what extent should the charter and bylaws (and any amendments) of the intermediate holding company be subject to review and approval by the OTS? Should the OTS require that provisions of the intermediate company's charter be consistent with the Federal MHC charter?

(5) The savings association subsidiary of a MHC is subject to various restrictions on stock issuances, including a requirement that all stock issuances generally be structured in a manner that is similar to a stock conversion offering under 12 CFR part 563b. Should these restrictions also be applicable to the intermediate holding company? If not, why not? Should all other provisions of 12 CFR part 575 governing minority stock issuances be applicable to minority stock issuances by intermediate holding companies? If not, why not?

(6) What are the consequences to the MHC of permitting the intermediate holding company to retain capital generated by the savings association subsidiary?

(7) Other than permitting stock repurchases and, perhaps, facilitating acquisitions and expanding the powers in the MHC structure, are there other reasons for creating a multi-tier structure? Commenters should identify any additional potential benefits of a multi-tier holding company structure and address any necessary regulatory changes that would facilitate the use of the multi-tier structure consistent with the MHC statute.

Dated: November 1, 1996.

By the Office of Thrift Supervision.

Nicolas P. Retsinas,

Director.

[FR Doc. 96–28989 Filed 11–12–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6720–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 92–CE–25–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 airplanes. The proposed action would require repetitively inspecting the weld area between the strut and the lower plate of the nose landing gear leg for cracks, and replacing the strut when cracks are found. The proposed AD is the result of several reports of cracks in the weld securing the nose wheel steering bottom bracket to the nose landing gear leg on the affected airplanes. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent nose landing gear failure caused by cracks in the weld area between the strut and the lower plate of the nose landing gear leg, which could result in loss of control of the airplane during landing operations.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before January 31, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 92–CE–25–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. Comments may be inspected at this location between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted.

Service information that applies to the proposed AD may be obtained from Avions Pierre Robin, 1, Route de Troyes, 21121 Darois France; telephone: 80 35 61 01; facsimile: 80 35 60 80. This information also may be examined at the Rules Docket at the address below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Greg Holt, Program Manager, Brussels Aircraft Certification Division, FAA, Europe, Africa, and Middle East Office, c/o American Embassy, B–1000 Brussels, Belgium; telephone (32 2) 513.2692; facsimile (32 2) 230.6899; or Mr. Roman T. Gabrys, Project Officer, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Office, FAA, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone (816) 426–6934; facsimile (816) 426–2169.

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 should 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 that summarizes 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 No. 92–CE–25–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, Central Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 92–CE–25–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Discussion

The Direction Generale de L'Aviation Civile (DGAC), which is the airworthiness authority for France, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 airplanes. The DGAC reports that cracks in the weld securing the nose wheel steering bottom bracket to the nose landing gear leg have been found on several of the affected airplanes. This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to nose landing gear failure, which could result in loss of control of the airplane during landing operations.

Applicable Service Information

Avions Pierre Robin Service Bulletin (SB) No. 101, Revision 3, dated March 5, 1992, specifies a dye penetrant inspection of the welding area between the strut and lower plate of the bottom bracket of the nose landing gear leg. This SB also includes a figure that depicts the inspection area, and includes crack limitations for when the strut needs repairs.

The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued DGAC AD 83–206(A)R3, dated March 18, 1992, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in France.

The FAA's Determination

This airplane model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC; reviewed all available information, including the service information referenced above; and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of the Provisions of the Proposed AD

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Avions Pierre Robin Model R2160 airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require repetitively inspecting the weld area between the strut and the lower plate of the nose landing gear leg for cracks, and replacing the strut when cracks are found.

Differences Between the Proposed AD, Service Bulletin, and DGAC AD

Both Avions Pierre Robin SB No. 101, Revision 3, dated March 5, 1992, and DGAC AD 83–206(A)R3, dated March 18, 1992, specify repetitive inspection intervals of 25 hours time-in-service if a crack in the weld area is found that is within a certain limit. The limit is ''if the crack runs along the circumference and is less than 15 mm long max. or/and radial crack is less than 8 mm max.'' The proposed AD, if adopted, would not allow continued flight if any crack is found. FAA policy is to disallow airplane operation when known cracks exist in primary structure (the nose landing gear leg is considered primary structure).

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 10 airplanes in the U.S. registry would be affected by the proposed AD, that it would take approximately 1 workhour per airplane to accomplish the proposed initial inspection, and that the average labor rate is approximately $60 an hour. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $600. This figure does not take into account the number of repetitive inspections each airplane owner/operator would incur over the life of the airplane, or the number of airplanes that would have cracked weld areas and would need the strut replaced. The FAA has no way of determining the number of repetitive inspections each owner/operator would incur over the life of the airplane or the number of nose landing gear leg struts that would need to be replaced because of cracks in the weld area.

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 action (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); 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 has been placed 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 a new airworthiness directive (AD) to read as follows:

Avions Pierre Robin: Docket No. 92–CE–25–AD.

Applicability: Model R2160 airplanes (all serial numbers), certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been 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 (d) 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 initially within the next 100 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished, and thereafter as follows, as applicable:

1. If the width of the lower plate of the bottom bracket of the nose landing gear leg is 84 millimeters: at intervals not to exceed 500 hours TIS; or

2. If the width of the lower plate of the bottom bracket of the nose landing gear leg is less than 84 millimeters: at intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS.

To prevent nose landing gear failure caused by cracks in the weld area between the strut and the lower plate of the nose landing gear leg, which could result in loss of control of the airplane during landing operations, accomplish the following:

(a) Inspect, using dye penetrant methods, the weld area between the strut and the lower plate of the nose landing gear leg for cracks. Use the figure in Avions Pierre Robin Service Bulletin (SB) No. 101, Revision 3, dated March 5, 1992, as a guide in accomplishing this inspection.

(b) If any crack is found during any inspection required by this AD, prior to further flight, replace the strut with a new or serviceable strut.

(1) If the replacement strut is not new, prior to further flight after installing it, accomplish the inspection specified in paragraph (a) of this AD.

(2) Replacing the strut with a new or serviceable strut does not eliminate the repetitive inspection requirement of this AD.

(c) 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.

(d) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an equivalent level of safety may be approved by the Manager, Brussels Aircraft Certification Division, FAA, Europe, Africa, and Middle East Office, c/o American Embassy, B–1000 Brussels, Belgium. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Brussels Aircraft Certification Division.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Brussels Aircraft Certification Division.

(e) All persons affected by this directive may obtain copies of the document referred to herein upon request to Avions Pierre Robin, 1, Route de Troyes, 21121 Darois France; or may examine this document at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on November 5, 1996.

Michael Gallagher,

Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 96–28945 Filed 11–12–96; 8:45 am]

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14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 95–ANE–56]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc RB.211–524 Series Turbofan Engines

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 Rolls-Royce plc RB.211–524 series turbofan engines. This proposal would require initial and repetitive borescope inspections of the head section and meterpanel assembly of the combustion liner, and replacement, if necessary, with serviceable parts. In addition, this AD would propose an optional installation of a front combustion liner with a strengthened head section as a terminating action to the inspection requirements. This proposal is prompted by reports of engine fires due to premature engine combustor distress. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent engine combustor liner deterioration due to thermal fatigue, which can result in combustor liner and case burn-through and engine fire.

DATES: Comments must be received by January 13, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), New England Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 95–ANE–56, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803–5299. Comments may be inspected at this location between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Rolls-Royce North America, Inc., 2001 South Tibbs Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46241; telephone (317) 230–3995, fax (317) 230–4743. This information may be examined at the FAA, New England Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eugene Triozzi, Aerospace Engineer, Engine Certification Office, FAA, Engine and Propeller Directorate, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803–5299; telephone (617) 238–7148, fax (617) 238–7199.

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 should 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 95–ANE–56.'' 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, New England Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 95–ANE–56, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803–5299.

Discussion

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom, recently notified the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that an unsafe condition may exist on Rolls-Royce plc (R–R) RB.211–524 series turbofan engines. The CAA received three reports of engine fires during takeoff and climb. The investigation revealed that the engine combustor liners had deteriorated, due to thermal fatigue of either the head section or meterpanels. In addition, the CAA received reports of premature engine combustor distress found during routine borescope inspections. This condition, if not corrected, could result in engine combustor liner deterioration due to thermal fatigue, which can result in combustor liner and case burn-through and engine fire.

Rolls-Royce plc has issued Service Bulletin (SB) No. RB.211–72–B482, Revision 2, dated March 11, 1996, that specifies procedures for borescope inspections; and SB No. RB.211–72–9764, Revision 2, dated November 10, 1995, that specifies procedures for installing a front combustion liner with a strengthened head section manufactured of C263 material. The CAA classified SB No. RB.211–72–B482, Revision 2, dated March 11, 1996, as mandatory and issued AD 005–07–95, dated March 11, 1996, in order to assure the airworthiness of these engines in the United Kingdom.

This engine model is manufactured in the United Kingdom and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of Section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the CAA has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the CAA, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.