

(2) At the next time the PCU is sent to a repair facility.

(e) If any reworked PCU manifold cylinder bores containing chrome plating are found to be installed during the inspection required by paragraph (d) of this AD: Prior to further flight, replace the cylinder bores with bores that have been reworked using the oversize method or the steel sleeve method specified in Boeing Service Letter 737-SL-27-30, dated April 1, 1985. Accomplish the replacement in accordance with the service letter.

(f) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install a reworked PCU manifold cylinder bore containing chrome plating on a rudder PCU having P/N 65C37052-(), on any airplane unless the cylinder bore has been reworked using the oversize method or the steel sleeve method specified in Boeing Service Letter 737-SL-27-30, dated April 1, 1985.

(g) 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 Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. 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.

(h) 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 February 11, 1998.

Gilbert L. Thompson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98-4112 Filed 2-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97-NM-251-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9 and DC-9-80 Series Airplanes, Model MD-88 Airplanes, and C-9 (Military) 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 McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9 and DC-9-80 series airplanes, Model MD-88 airplanes, and C-9 (military) series airplanes. This proposal would require an inspection to determine if the latching lever pin of the speed brake passes an axial force check, and a visual inspection to determine if the staking of the latching lever pin is acceptable; and follow-on corrective action, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by reports that the speed brake handle jammed in the ground spoiler position. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent the retraction of the spoilers and the full advancement of the left throttle during a go-around, as the result of a jammed speed brake handle pin.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97-NM-251-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 The Boeing Company, Douglas Products Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Technical Publications Business Administration, Dept. C1-L51 (2-60). This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Walter Eierman, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone (562) 627-5336; fax (562) 627-5210.

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 97-NM-251-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. 97-NM-251-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports that the speed brake handle jammed in the ground spoiler position on McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-80 series airplanes. These airplanes had accumulated as low as 547 total flight hours or 299 total flight cycles. Investigation revealed that the cause of such jamming was attributed to an oversize pin hole and improper staking of the pin hole, which caused migration of the pin. A jammed speed brake handle pin, if not corrected, could prevent the retraction of the spoilers and the full advancement of the left throttle during a go-around.

The subject part on certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9 series airplanes, Model MD-88 airplanes, and C-9 (military) series airplanes is identical to that on the affected Model DC-9-80 series airplanes. Therefore, all of these airplanes may be subject to the same unsafe condition.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC-9-27-346, Revision 01, dated July 29, 1997. The service bulletin describes procedures for performing an inspection to determine if the latching lever pin of

the speed brake passes an axial force check, and a visual inspection to determine if the staking of the latching lever pin is acceptable; and follow-on corrective action, if necessary. (The follow-on corrective actions include repetitive inspections, replacement of the speed brake latching lever, and temporary repair of the latching lever pin.)

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 an inspection to determine if the latching lever pin of the speed brake passes an axial force check, and a visual inspection to determine if the staking of the latching lever pin is acceptable; and follow-on corrective action, if necessary. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 2,050 McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9 and DC-9-80 series airplanes, Model MD-88 airplanes, and C-9 (military) series airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 1,250 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 5 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$375,000, or \$300 per airplane.

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.

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:

McDonnell Douglas: Docket 97-NM-251-AD.

Applicability: Model DC-9-10, -20, -30, -40, and -50, and DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), and DC-9-87 (MD-87) series airplanes; Model MD-88 airplanes; and C-9 (military) series airplanes; as listed in McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC9-27-346, Revision 1, dated July 29, 1997; 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 (b) 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 prevent the retraction of the spoilers and the full advancement of the left throttle during a go-around, as the result of a jammed

speed brake handle pin, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 12 months after the effective date of this AD, perform an inspection to determine if the latching lever pin of the speed brake passes an axial force check, and a visual inspection to determine if the staking of the latching lever pin is "acceptable", in accordance with McDonnell Douglas DC9-27-346, Revision 01, dated July 29, 1997.

Note 2: The criteria for determining whether the staking is "acceptable" are defined in Figure 1 of the service bulletin.

(1) Condition 1. If the pin passes the axial force check and the staking is found to be acceptable, no further action is required by this AD.

(2) Condition 2. If the pin passes the axial force check and the staking is found to be unacceptable, accomplishing the actions specified in Condition 2, Option 1, or Condition 2, Option 2 of the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin. These actions shall be accomplished at the times specified in paragraph E. "Compliance" of the service bulletin. Accomplishment of the replacement of the speed brake latching lever constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of this AD.

(3) Condition 3. If the pin fails the axial force check and the staking is found to be unacceptable, accomplish the actions specified in Condition 3, Option 1, or Condition 3, Option 2 of the Accomplishment Instructions of the service bulletin. These actions shall be accomplished at the times specified in paragraph E. "Compliance" of the service bulletin. Accomplishment of the replacement of the speed brake latching lever constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of this AD.

(b) 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, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

Note 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles ACO.

(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.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on February 11, 1998.

Gilbert L. Thompson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 98-4111 Filed 2-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U