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

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To ensure replacement of the double shuttle valves when they have reached their maxmimum life limit, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, perform a one-time visual inspection of the double shuttle valve in the upper fuselage fairing to determine if the part number of the valve is labeled correctly, in accordance with Dornier Service Bulletin SB–328–27–236, Revision 1, dated November 5, 1997.

(b) If the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD reveals that the installed double shuttle valve is labeled incorrectly, prior to further flight, accomplish paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this AD, in accordance with Dornier Service Bulletin SB–328–27–236, Revision 1, dated November 5, 1997.

(1) Revise the valve identification label to correctly identify the part number of the double shuttle valve, and delete any reference to operating pressure (i.e., BAR 205).

(2) Verify that the installed valve is within the limits specified for that particular part number in accordance with the service bulletin. If the installed double shuttle valve is outside the limits, prior to further flight, replace the double shuttle valve with a new part.

(c) 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, International Branch, ANM–116, 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, International Branch, ANM–116.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM–116.

(d) 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.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in German airworthiness directive 1997–321/2, dated January 15, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 13, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–7212 Filed 3–19–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–20–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC–9–80 Series Airplanes and Model MD–88 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–9–80 series airplanes and Model MD–88 airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections to detect fatigue cracking of certain fuselage skin panels, and repair, if necessary. For certain airplanes, the proposed AD also provides for an optional preventative modification, which, if accomplished, would terminate the repetitive inspections. This proposal is prompted by reports of fatigue cracking of certain fuselage skin panels. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent such fatigue cracking, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane, and consequent loss of pressurization.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 4, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–20–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, ept. 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: Brent Bandley, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90846; telephone (562) 627–5237; 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–20–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–20–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports indicating that fatigue cracking of the fuselage skin has been detected on several McDonnell Douglas Model DC–9–30 series airplanes. The cracking was located along the line of attachments that secure the fuselage skin to longeron 22. The cracking emanated from multiple attachment holes at 45-degree angles. On one airplane, cracking extended for approximately 12 inches in length. Investigation and laboratory analysis of skin segments have revealed that the cracking was due to material fatigue. Furthermore, during repair of one airplane, additional damage was

found on longerons 23L and 24L at station Y=200.000. The affected airplanes had accumulated between 44,618 and 74,043 flight hours, and 45,210 and 88,093 landings at the time of inspection. Fatigue cracking of certain fuselage skin panels, if not detected and corrected in a timely manner, could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane, and consequent loss of pressurization.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved McDonnell Douglas MD–80 Service Bulletin 53–253, dated March 31, 1994. The service bulletin describes procedures for performing repetitive high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections to detect fatigue cracking of the forward lower left fuselage skin panels between stations Y=160.000 and Y=200.000; and repair, if necessary. The service bulletin describes procedures for a permanent repair for cracking within certain limitations, which would eliminate the need for repetitive HFEC inspections. Additionally, the service bulletin describes procedures for an optional preventative modification for airplanes on which no cracking is detected. The preventative modification includes cold working holes and installing oversize fasteners, which would minimize the possibility of cracking. Accomplishment of the preventative modification would eliminate the need for the repetitive HFEC inspections.

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 repetitive HFEC inspections to detect fatigue cracking of the forward lower left fuselage skin panels between station Y=160.000 and Y=200.000; and repair, if necessary. The proposed AD also provides for an optional preventative modification for airplanes on which no cracking is detected, which, if accomplished, would terminate the repetitive inspections. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

Differences Between this Rule and the Relevant Service Bulletin

Operators should note that, although the service bulletin recommends contacting the manufacturer for any cracking that extends forward of frame station Y=160.000 or aft of station Y=200.000, this proposed AD requires that such cracking be repaired in accordance with a method approved by the FAA.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 1,200 McDonnell Douglas Model DC–9–80 and Model MD–88 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 800 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 24 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection, and that the average labor rate is $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed inspection on U.S. operators is estimated to be $1,152,000, or $1,440 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.

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–20–AD.

Applicability: Model DC–9–80 series airplanes and Model MD–88 airplanes, as listed in McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin 53–253, dated March 31, 1994; 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 (e) 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 loss of pressurization due to reduced structural integrity of the airplane, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 44,500 total landings, or within 4,500 landings after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later: Perform a high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection to detect fatigue cracking of the fuselage skin panels between stations Y=160.000 and Y=200.000 at the left side of longeron 22 below the airstair door cutout, in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin 53–253, dated March 31, 1994.

(b) If no cracking is detected, accomplish the actions specified in either paragraph (b)(1) or (b)(2) of this AD, in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin 53–253, dated March 31, 1994, at the time specified.

(1) Perform the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD thereafter at intervals not to exceed 4,500 landings until the requirements of paragraph (b)(2) of this AD have been accomplished. Or,

(2) Prior to further flight, install the preventative modification in accordance with the service bulletin. Accomplishment of the preventative modification prior to detection of any cracking constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of this AD.

(c) If any cracking is detected within frame stations Y=160.000 and Y=200.000, accomplish the actions specified in either paragraph (c)(1) or (c)(2) of this AD, in

accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin 53–253, dated March 31, 1994.

(1) Accomplish the actions specified in paragraphs (c)(1)(i), (c)(1)(ii), (c)(1)(iii), and (c)(1)(iv) of this AD at the times specified.

(i) Prior to further flight, install the temporary repair in accordance with the service bulletin.

(ii) Within 3,000 landings after installation of the temporary repair, and thereafter, at intervals not to exceed 3,000 landings, perform visual inspections to detect cracking of the repaired area, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(iii) Within 4,500 landings after installation of the temporary repair, and thereafter, at intervals not to exceed 4,500 landings, perform HFEC inspections to detect cracking of any area not covered by the temporary doubler repair, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(iv) Within 8,000 landings after installation of the temporary repair, accomplish the permanent repair in accordance with the service bulletin. Accomplishment of the permanent repair constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of this AD.

(2) Prior to further flight, accomplish the permanent repair in accordance with the service bulletin. Accomplishment of the permanent repair constitutes terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirements of this AD.

(d) If any cracking is detected that extends forward of station Y=160.000 or aft of station Y=200.000, prior to further flight, repair in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

(e) 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 ACO. 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 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles ACO.

(f) 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 March 13, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–7229 Filed 3–19–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–CE–09–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Glaser-Dirks Flugzeugbau GmbH Model DG–500M Gliders

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 Glaser-Dirks Flugzeugbau GmbH (Glaser-Dirks) Model DG–500M gliders. The proposed AD would require installing a rudder gap seal and modifying the cooling liquid reservoir mount. The proposed AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for Germany. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent rudder vibrations caused by flow separation at the rudder gap, which could result in flutter with consequent loss of rudder control.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 17, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–09–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 DG Flugzeugbau GmbH, Postfach 4120, D–76625 Bruchsal 4, Germany; telephone: +49 7257–89–0; facsimile: +49 7257–8922. This information also may be examined at the Rules Docket at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Mike Kiesov, Aerospace Engineer, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service, 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. 98–CE–09–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 Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–09–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Discussion

The Luftfahrt-Bundesamt (LBA), which is the airworthiness authority for Germany, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Glaser-Dirks Model DG–500M gliders. The LBA reports that rudder vibrations could occur at high speeds. These vibrations are caused by flow separation at the rudder gap. This condition was detected during high speed flight tests.

These conditions, if not corrected, could result in flutter with consequent loss of rudder control.

Relevant Service Information

Glaser-Dirks has issued Technical Note (TN) No. 843/5, dated November 30, 1992, which specifies installing a rudder gap seal and modifying the cooling liquid reservoir mount. Procedures for installing the rudder gap seal are included in the applicable maintenance manual, and procedures for modifying the cooling liquid reservoir mount are included in Glaser-