

Repair

(d) Except as provided by paragraphs (e) and (f) of this AD, if any cracking is detected during any inspection required by paragraph (a), (b), or (c) of this AD: Prior to further flight, repair in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2425, dated October 29, 1998.

(e) If any cracking is detected during any inspection required by paragraph (a), (b), or (c) of this AD, and Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2425, dated October 29, 1998, specifies to contact Boeing for repair instructions: Repair any cracking, prior to further flight, 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 (DER) who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make such findings. For a repair method to be approved by the Manager, Seattle ACO, as required by this paragraph, the approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

Operator's "Equivalent Procedure"

(f) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2425, dated October 29, 1998, specifies that an inspection or a repair, as applicable, may be accomplished in accordance with an operator's "equivalent procedure": The inspection or repair, as applicable, must be accomplished in accordance with the applicable chapter of the Boeing 747 Maintenance Manual or the Boeing 747 Structural Repair Manual specified in the alert service bulletin.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(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 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 3: 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

(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 January 24, 2000.

Donald L. Riggan,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 00-2090 Filed 2-1-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 99-NM-83-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (EMBRAER) Model EMB-145 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 EMBRAER Model EMB-145 series airplanes. This proposal would require the installation of reinforcements in the lower portion of wing rib 15 on the left-hand and right-hand sides of the airplane. This proposal is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent reduced structural integrity of the wing flap support structure.

DATES: Comments must be received by March 3, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 99-NM-83-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 Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (EMBRAER), P.O. Box 343—CEP 12.225, Sao Jose dos Campos—SP, Brazil. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix Boulevard, suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Satish Lall, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Flight Test Branch, ACE-116A, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office, One Crown Center, 1895 Phoenix

Boulevard, suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia 30349; telephone (770) 703-6082; fax (770) 703-6097.

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-83-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-83-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The Departamento de Aviacao Civil (DAC), which is the airworthiness authority for Brazil, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain EMBRAER Model EMB-145 series airplanes. The DAC advises that the damage tolerance for EMB-145 series airplanes indicates that reinforcements must be installed in the lower portion of the wing at rib 15 on the right-and left-hand sides of the airplane in order to maintain the validity of the current inspection interval of 2,000 flight cycles (prescribed in the maintenance instructions for the airplane). Such reinforcements will help to preserve the

structural integrity of the wing flap support structure.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

EMBRAER has issued Service Bulletin 145-57-0008, Change No. 01, dated February 12, 1999, which describes procedures for installation of reinforcements in the lower portion of wing rib 15 on the left-hand and right-hand sides of the airplane. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The DAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued Brazilian airworthiness directive 1999-01-02R1, dated March 15, 1999, in order to assure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in Brazil.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in Brazil and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of § 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DAC, 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.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 33 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 20 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$3,124 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$142,692, or \$4,324 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 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. Therefore, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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:

EMBRAER: Docket 99-NM-83-AD.

Applicability: Model EMB-145 series airplanes, serial numbers 145004 through 145058 inclusive, and 145060; 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 reduced structural integrity of the wing flap support structure, accomplish the following:

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 8,000 total flight cycles, or within 45 days after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, install reinforcements in the lower portion of rib 15 on the left-hand and right-hand sides of the airplane in accordance with Embraer Service Bulletin 145-57-0008, Change No. 1, dated February 12, 1999.

Note 2: Installation in accordance with Embraer Service Bulletin 145-57-0008, dated October 21, 1998, accomplished prior to the effective date of this AD, is also acceptable for compliance with the requirements of paragraph (a) of this AD.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(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, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Small 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, Atlanta ACO.

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

Special Flight Permits

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Brazilian airworthiness directive 1999-01-02R1, dated March 15, 1999.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 27, 2000.

Donald L. Riggins,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 00-2224 Filed 2-1-00; 8:45 am]

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