Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003–NM–172–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Model BAe 146 and Avro 146–RJ 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 BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Model BAe 146 and Avro 146–RJ series airplanes. This proposal would require replacing the existing bellows inlet duct of the auxiliary power unit (APU) system with a new, improved rectangular metallic bellows inlet duct. This action is necessary to prevent air from the APU bay being ingested into the flight deck and passenger cabin resulting in poor air quality and, if the air is contaminated, possible incapacitation of the flightcrew and passengers. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by June 28, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003–NM–172–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227–1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: *9-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov.* Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain ''Docket No. 2003–NM–172–AD'' in the subject line and need not be submitted in triplicate. Comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 or 2000 or ASCII text.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from British Aerospace Regional Aircraft American Support, 13850 Mclearen Road, Herndon, Virginia 20171. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Todd Thompson, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–1175; fax (425) 227–1149.

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 action may be changed in light of the comments received.

Submit comments using the following format:

- Organize comments issue-by-issue. For example, discuss a request to change the compliance time and a request to change the service bulletin reference as two separate issues.
- For each issue, state what specific change to the proposed AD is being requested.
- Include justification (*e.g.,* reasons or data) for each request.

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 action must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket Number 2003–NM–172–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. 2003–NM–172–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Model BAe 146 and Avro 146-RJ series airplanes. The CAA advises that the existing auxiliary power unit (APU) inlet duct and sealing configuration has been found to be unreliable in service. This condition, if not corrected, could result in air from the APU bay being ingested into the flight deck and passenger cabin resulting in poor air quality and, if the air is contaminated, possible incapacitation of the flightcrew and passengers.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

BAE Systems (Operations) Limited has issued Modification Service Bulletin SB.49–036–36019E, Revision 4, dated April 30, 2003. The service bulletin describes procedures for replacing the existing rubber bellows inlet duct and sealing configuration of the APU system, with a new, improved rectangular metallic bellows inlet duct, which incorporates an improved seal and clamp configuration. The procedures include instructions for degreasing and priming the mating surfaces of the new duct. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The CAA classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued British airworthiness directive 007–04–2003 to

ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in the United Kingdom.

FAA's Conclusions

These airplane models are manufactured in the United Kingdom and are 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.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed AD

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, except as discussed below.

Difference Between the Service Information and Proposed AD

The service bulletin specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer. This AD does not include such a requirement.

Clarification of Compliance Time

Operators should note that the British airworthiness directive and the service bulletin both specify to replace the APU bellows inlet duct at the next scheduled APU removal or the next ''C-check,'' whichever is first. Because maintenance and ''C-check'' schedules vary among operators, this proposed AD would require accomplishment of the replacement within 24 months or 4,000 flight cycles after the effective date of the AD, whichever is first. We find that compliance within 24 months or 4,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD is appropriate for affected airplanes to continue to operate without compromising safety.

Cost Impact

We estimate that 54 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed replacement, and that the average labor rate is $65 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately $4,500 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $250,020, or $4,630 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. The cost impact figures discussed in AD rulemaking actions represent only the time necessary to perform the specific actions actually required by the AD. These figures typically do not include incidental costs, such as the time required to gain access and close up, planning time, or time necessitated by other administrative actions.

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:

BAE Systems (Operations) Limited (Formerly British Aerospace Regional Aircraft): Docket 2003–NM–172–AD.

Applicability: Model 146 series airplanes with Modification HCM30027A, HCM36019A, or HCM30373A installed; and Model Avro 146–RJ series airplanes with Modification HCM36019A or HCM30373A installed; certificated in any category.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent air from the auxiliary power unit (APU) bay being ingested into the flight deck and passenger cabin resulting in poor air quality and, if the air is contaminated, possible incapacitation of the flightcrew and passengers, accomplish the following:

Replacement of Rubber Bellows Inlet Duct

(a) Within 24 months or 4,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever is first: Replace the existing rubber bellows inlet duct and sealing configuration of the APU system, with a new, improved rectangular metallic bellows inlet duct, which incorporates an improved seal and clamp configuration, per the Accomplishment Instructions of BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Modification Service Bulletin SB.49–036–36019E, Revision 4, dated April 30, 2003. Although the service bulletin specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not include such a requirement.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(b) In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance for this AD.

Note 1: The subject of this AD is addressed in British airworthiness directive 007–04–2003.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 18, 2004.

Kevin M. Mullin,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003–NM–69–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model MD–11 and –11F Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.