DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39


RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM); extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: This document announces an extension of the comment period for the above-referenced NPRM, which proposed the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain The Boeing Company Model 747–400, 747–400D, and 747–400F series airplanes. That NPRM invited comments concerning the proposed requirement to modify the fuel quantity indicating system (FQIS) to prevent development of an ignition source inside the center fuel tank due to electrical fault conditions. This extension of the comment period is necessary to provide all interested persons an opportunity to present their views on the proposed requirements of that NPRM.

DATES: We must receive comments on the NPRM by September 19, 2016.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

• Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
• Fax: 202–493–2251.
• Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2016–6145; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA–2016–6145; Directorate Identifier 2015–NM–056–AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to http://www.regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

We issued an NPRM to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain The Boeing Company Model 747–400, 747–400D, and 747–400F series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on May 3, 2016 (81 FR 26490) (“the NPRM”). The NPRM proposed to require modifying the fuel quantity indicating system (FQIS) to prevent development of an ignition source inside the center fuel tank due to electrical fault conditions. The NPRM invited comments on regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposal. The NPRM was prompted by fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer. The actions specified by the NPRM are intended to prevent ignition sources inside the center fuel tank, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the airplane.

Related Rulemaking

At the time we issued the NPRM, we issued five other NPRMs that also proposed to require modification of the FQIS:


Actions Since Previous NPRM Was Issued

Since we issued the NPRM, we have received a request from Airlines for America (A4A) to extend the comment
period. A4A stated that the NPRMs are controversial and could drive substantial costs, especially for cargo airlines. To be able to prepare informed and meaningful comments with coordinated consensus among its members, A4A requested a longer comment period to understand a number of factors, including related service information, data and safety analysis of the unsafe condition, and potential costs.

We agree with the request, and have determined that it is appropriate to extend the comment period for the NPRM to give all interested persons additional time to examine the proposed requirements and submit comments. We have determined that extending the comment period until September 19, 2016, will not compromise the safety of the affected airplanes.


Because no other portion of the proposal or other regulatory information has been changed, the entire proposal is not being republished.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 8, 2016.

Michael Kaszynski,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

For Further Information Contact: Jon Regimbal, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM–140S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057–3356; phone: 425–917–6506; fax: 425–917–6590; email: Jon.Reginbal@faa.gov.

Discussion

We issued an NPRM to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to certain The Boeing Company Model 767 airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on May 4, 2016 (81 FR 26747) (“the NPRM”). The NPRM proposed to require modifying the fuel quantity indicating system (FQIS) to prevent development of an ignition source inside the center fuel tank due to electrical fault conditions.

The NPRM invited comments on regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposal. The NPRM was prompted by fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer. The actions specified by the NPRM are intended to prevent ignition sources inside the center fuel tank, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the airplane.

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