

established by OPM as described in paragraph (c) of this section, may involve comparing, categorizing, and ranking employees or groups on the basis of their performance. Such procedures may also be used to make award determinations and promotion decisions.

(e) *Summary levels.*

(1) An appraisal program must use one of the following patterns of summary levels, but Pattern A may only be used for seasonal employees, teachers, General Schedules grades 1–4, and Federal Wage System employees:

Pattern	Summary level				
	1	2	3	4	5
A	X	.....	X	.....	.....
B	X	.....	X	.....	X
C	X	.....	X	X	X

(2) Within any of the patterns shown in paragraph (e)(1) of this section, summary levels must comply with the following requirements:

- (i) Level 1 through Level 5 are ordered categories, with Level 1 as the lowest and Level 5 as the highest;
- (ii) Level 1 is “Unacceptable”;
- (iii) Level 3 is “Fully Successful” or equivalent; and
- (iv) Level 5 is “Outstanding” or equivalent.

(3) The term “Outstanding” may be used only to describe the summary level “Level 5.”

(4) The designation of a summary level and its pattern shall be used to provide consistency in describing ratings of record and as a reference point for applying other related regulations, including, but not limited to, assigning additional retention service credit under § 351.504 of this chapter.

(5) Under the provisions of § 351.504(e) of this chapter, the number of years of additional retention service credit established for a summary level of a rating of record shall be applied in a uniform and consistent manner within a competitive area in any given reduction in force, but the number of years may vary:

- (i) In different reductions in force;
- (ii) In different competitive areas; and
- (iii) In different summary level patterns within the same competitive area.

(e) The rating of record or performance rating for a disabled veteran must not be lowered because the veteran has been absent from work to seek medical treatment as provided in Executive Order 5396.

(f) When a rating of record cannot be prepared at the time specified, the appraisal period must be extended.

Once the conditions necessary to complete a rating of record have been met, a rating of record must be prepared as soon as practicable.

(g) Each rating of record must cover a specified appraisal period. Agencies must not carry over a rating of record prepared for a previous appraisal period as the rating of record for a subsequent appraisal period(s) without an actual evaluation of the employee’s performance during the subsequent appraisal period.

(h) When either a regular appraisal period or an extended appraisal period ends and any agency-established deadline for providing ratings of record passes or a subsequent rating of record is issued, an agency must not produce or change retroactively a rating of record that covers that earlier appraisal period except that a rating of record may be changed—

- (1) Within 60 days of issuance based upon an informal request by the employee;
- (2) As a result of a formal proceeding permitted by law or regulation that results in a final determination by appropriate authority that the rating of record must be changed or as part of a bona fide settlement of a formal proceeding; or
- (3) Where the agency determines that a rating of record was incorrectly recorded or calculated.

(i) A performance rating may be prepared at such other times as an appraisal program may specify for special circumstances including, but not limited to, transfers and performance on details.

(j) A rating of record may not be challenged through the grievance provisions of 5 U.S.C. 7121.

■ 5. Amend § 430.210 by revising paragraph (b) to read as follows:

§ 430.210 OPM responsibilities.

* * * * *

(b) OPM must evaluate and certify the operation and application of an agency’s performance appraisal system(s) and program(s) on a biennial basis. OPM may recommend that the Office of Management and Budget limit an agency’s aggregate awards spending based on an unfavorable evaluation. OPM must issue biennial certification criteria and policy.

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 2026–03619 Filed 2–23–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325–38–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2026–1322; Project Identifier AD–2025–01665–T]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain The Boeing Company Model 787–8, 787–9, and 787–10 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by a report that, during production, certain sealant installations within the center wing fuel tank did not receive required visual and adhesion inspections. This proposed AD would require a detailed inspection of certain sealant installations in the left, right, and center wing side-of-body areas, an adhesion test of the sealant, and applicable on-condition actions. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by April 10, 2026.

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 [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA–2026–1322; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- For Boeing material identified in this proposed AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS),

2600 Westminster Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone 562-797-1717; website myboeingfleet.com.

- You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2026-1322.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tak Kobayashi, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3553; email: takahisa.kobayashi@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments using a method listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2026-1322; Project Identifier AD-2025-01665-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Takahisa Kobayashi, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3553; email: takahisa.kobayashi@faa.gov. Any commentary that the FAA receives that is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Background

The FAA has received a report indicating that, during production, certain sealant installations within the center wing fuel tank volume did not receive required visual and adhesion inspections. Without the required inspections, there is a risk that sealant defects could be present. This condition, if not addressed, could result in development of an ignition source within the fuel tank volume and a risk of a fuel tank explosion during a lightning strike event.

FAA’s Determination

The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition

described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787-81205-SB570053-00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025. This material specifies procedures for a detailed inspection for any sealant defects and any surface depression defects on identified sealant installed in the left, right, and center wing side-of-body area and the area between side-of-body rib and rib 2, an adhesion test on identified sealants installed in the left, right and center wing side-of-body area and the area between side-of-body rib and rib 2, and applicable on-condition actions. On-condition actions also include contacting Boeing for repair instructions and performing a repair.

This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

Proposed AD Requirements in This NPRM

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the material already described, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. For information on the procedures and compliance times, see this material at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2026-1322.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 60 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

ESTIMATED COSTS

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Detailed inspection and adhesion test of sealant	34 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$2,890	\$0	\$2,890	\$173,400

The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the on-condition repairs specified in this proposed AD.

The FAA has included all known costs in its cost estimate. According to the manufacturer, however, some or all of the costs of this proposed AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected operators.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA’s authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency’s authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of

that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD 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.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Would not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

The Boeing Company: Docket No. FAA–2026–1322; Project Identifier AD–2025–01665–T.

(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by April 10, 2026.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 787–8, 787–9, and 787–10 airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wing.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report that, during production, certain sealant installations within the center wing fuel tank volume did not receive required visual and adhesion inspections. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the potential for sealant defects. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in development of an ignition source within the fuel tank volume and a risk of a fuel tank explosion during a lightning strike event.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Required Actions

Except as specified by paragraph (h) of this AD: At the applicable times specified in the “Compliance” paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025, do all applicable actions identified in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025.

Note 1 to paragraph (g): Guidance for accomplishing the actions required by this AD can be found in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025, which is referred to in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025.

(h) Exceptions to Requirements Bulletin Specifications

(1) Where the Compliance Time column of the table in the “Compliance” paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025, refers to the Issue 001 date of Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025, specifies contacting Boeing for repair instructions, this AD requires doing the repair using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i) of this AD.

(i) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, AIR–520, Continued Operational Safety Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the Continued Operational Safety Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j)(1) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC,

notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(2) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair, modification, or alteration required by this AD if it is approved by The Boeing Company Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, AIR–520, Continued Operational Safety Branch, FAA, to make those findings. To be approved, the repair method, modification deviation, or alteration deviation must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(j) Additional Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Tak Kobayashi, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206–231–3553; email: takahisa.kobayashi@faa.gov.

(2) Material identified in this AD that is not incorporated by reference is available at the address specified in paragraph (k)(3) this AD.

(k) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the material listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this material as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin B787–81205–SB570053–00 RB, Issue 001, dated November 5, 2025.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For Boeing material identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110–SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740–5600; telephone 562–797–1717; website myboeingfleet.com.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

(5) You may view this material at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, visit www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations or email fr.inspection@nara.gov.

Issued on February 12, 2026.

Lona C. Saccomando,

Acting Deputy Director, Integrated Certificate Management Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2026–03612 Filed 2–23–26; 8:45 am]

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