

(b) The load alleviation system must be designed so that, when any one connecting or transmitting element in the primary flight control system fails, adequate longitudinal control for safe flight and landing is available.

(c) The load alleviation system must be irreversible unless the TACS is properly balanced and has no unsafe flutter characteristics. The system must have adequate rigidity and reliability in the portion of the system from the tab to the attachment of the irreversible unit to the airplane structure.

(d) It must be demonstrated that the airplane is safely controllable and that the pilot can perform all maneuvers and operations necessary to effect a safe landing following any probable powered system runaway that reasonably might be expected in service, allowing for appropriate time delay after pilot recognition of the system runaway. The demonstration must be conducted at critical airplane weights and center of gravity positions.

(C) In place of 14 CFR part 23, 23.683 Operation tests requirement, comply with the following:

SC 23.683 Operation Tests

(a) It must be shown by operation tests that, when the load alleviation system is active and operational and loaded as prescribed in paragraph (b) of this section, the system is free from—

- (1) Jamming;
- (2) Excessive friction; and
- (3) Excessive deflection.

(b) The prescribed test loads are, for the entire system, loads corresponding to the limit airloads on the appropriate surface.

(D) In place of 14 CFR part 23, 23.685 Control system details requirement, comply with the following:

SC 23.685 Control System Details

(a) Each detail of the Tamarack Active Control Surface (TACS) must be designed and installed to prevent jamming, chafing, and interference from cargo, passengers, loose objects, or the freezing of moisture.

(b) There must be means in the cockpit to prevent the entry of foreign objects into places where they would jam any one connecting or transmitting element of the system.

(c) Each element of the load alleviation system must have design features, or must be distinctively and permanently marked, to minimize the possibility of incorrect assembly that could result in malfunctioning of the control system.

(E) In place of 14 CFR part 23, 23.697 Wing flap controls requirement, comply with the following:

SC 23.697 Load Alleviation System Controls

(a) The Tamarack Active Control Surface (TACS) must be designed so that, when the surface has been placed in any position, it will not move from that position unless the control is adjusted or is moved by the automatic operation of a load alleviation system.

(b) The rate of movement of the TACS in response to the automatic device must give satisfactory flight and performance characteristics under steady or changing conditions of airspeed, engine power, and attitude.

(F) In place of 14 CFR part 23, 23.701 Flap interconnection requirement, comply with the following:

SC 23.701 Load Alleviation System Interconnection

(a) The load alleviation system and related movable surfaces as a system must—

(1) Be synchronized by a mechanical interconnection between the movable surfaces; or by an approved equivalent means; or

(2) Be designed so that the occurrence of any failure of the system that would result in an unsafe flight characteristic of the airplane is extremely improbable; or

(b) The airplane must be shown to have safe flight characteristics with any combination of extreme positions of individual movable surfaces.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on May 2, 2012.

Earl Lawrence,

Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-11214 Filed 5-14-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 25

[Docket No. FAA-2012-0499; Notice No. 25-12-01-SC]

Special Conditions: Boeing, Model 737-800; Large Non-Structural Glass in the Passenger Compartment

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed special conditions.

SUMMARY: This action proposes special conditions for the Boeing Model 737-800 airplane. This airplane as modified by Lufthansa Technik will have a novel or unusual design feature associated

with the installation of large non-structural glass items in the cabin area of an executive interior occupied by passengers and crew. The installation of these items in a passenger compartment, which can be occupied during taxi, takeoff, and landing, is a novel or unusual design feature with respect to the material used. The applicable airworthiness regulations do not contain adequate or appropriate safety standards for this design feature. These proposed special conditions contain the additional safety standards that the Administrator considers necessary to establish a level of safety equivalent to that established by the existing airworthiness standards.

DATES: Send your comments on or before June 4, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Send comments identified by docket number FAA-2012-0499 using any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRegulations Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/> and follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- *Mail:* Send comments to Docket Operations, M-30, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Room W12-140, West Building Ground Floor, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- *Hand Delivery or Courier:* Take comments to Docket Operations in Room W12-140 of the West Building Ground Floor at 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays.

- *Fax:* Fax comments to Docket Operations at 202-493-2251.

Privacy: The FAA will post all comments it receives, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov/>, including any personal information the commenter provides. Using the search function of the docket Web site, anyone can find and read the electronic form of all comments received into any FAA docket, including the name of the individual sending the comment (or signing the comment for an association, business, labor union, etc.). DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement can be found in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477-19478), as well as at <http://DocketsInfo.dot.gov/>.

Docket: Background documents or comments received may be read at <http://www.regulations.gov/> at any time. Follow the online instructions for accessing the docket or go to the Docket Operations in Room W12-140 of the West Building Ground Floor at 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Shelden, FAA, Cabin Safety Branch, ANM-115, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-2785; facsimile 425-227-1232.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite interested people to take part in this rulemaking by sending written comments, data, or views. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the special conditions, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data.

We will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We may change these special conditions based on the comments we receive.

Background

On December 16, 2010, Lufthansa Technik AG, Weg Beim Jaeger 193, 22335 Hamburg Germany applied for a supplemental type certificate for the installation of large non-structural glass items in the cabin area of the executive interior occupied by passengers and crew in a Boeing Model 737-800. The Boeing Model 737-800, approved under Type Certificate No. A16WE, is a large transport category airplane that is limited to 189 passengers or less, depending on the interior configuration. This specific Boeing Model 737-800 configuration includes seating provisions for 34 passengers.

Type Certification Basis

Under the provisions of Title 14, Code of the Federal Regulations (14 CFR) 21.101, Lufthansa Technik must show that the Boeing Model 737-800, as changed, continues to meet the applicable provisions of the regulations incorporated by reference in Type Certificate No. A16WE or the applicable regulations in effect on the date of application for the change. The regulations incorporated by reference in the type certificate are commonly referred to as the "original type certification basis." The regulations incorporated by reference in Type Certificate No. A16WE are as follows: 14 CFR part 25 as amended by Amendments 25-1 through 25-77 with exceptions for the Boeing Model 737-800. In addition, the certification basis includes certain special conditions, exemptions, or later amended sections of the applicable part that are not relevant to these proposed special conditions.

If the Administrator finds that the applicable airworthiness regulations (i.e., 14 CFR part 25) do not contain adequate or appropriate safety standards for the Boeing Model 737-800 because of a novel or unusual design feature, special conditions are prescribed under the provisions of § 21.16.

Special conditions are initially applicable to the model for which they are issued. Should the applicant apply for a supplemental type certificate to modify any other model included on the same type certificate to incorporate the same or similar novel or unusual design feature, the special conditions would also apply to the other model under § 21.101.

In addition to the applicable airworthiness regulations and special conditions, the Boeing Model 737-800 must comply with the fuel vent and exhaust emission requirements of 14 CFR part 34 and the noise certification requirements of 14 CFR part 36.

The FAA issues special conditions, as defined in 14 CFR 11.19, in accordance with § 11.38, and they become part of the type-certification basis under § 21.101.

Novel or Unusual Design Features

The Boeing Model 737-800 will incorporate the following novel or unusual design features: The installation of large non-structural glass items, typically in the form of glass sheets in the cabin area of an executive interior occupied by passengers and crew.

These installations would be for aesthetic purposes, not for safety, in components other than windshields or windows. For these special conditions, a large glass item is 4 kg (approximately 10 pounds) and greater in mass. This limit was established as the mass at which a glass component could be expected to potentially cause widespread injury if it were to shatter or break free from its retention system.

The proposed special conditions address the novel and unusual design features for the use of large non-structural glass in the passenger cabin. These large glass items would be installed in occupied rooms or areas during taxi, take off, and landing, or rooms or areas that occupants do have to enter or pass through to get to any emergency exit. The installations of large non-structural glass items may include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- Glass partitions.
- Glass attached to the ceiling.
- Wall/door mounted mirrors/glass panels.

Discussion

The existing part 25 regulations only address the use of glass in windshields, instrument or display transparencies, or window applications. The regulations treat glass as unique for special applications where no other material will serve and address the adverse properties of glass.

Section 25.775, "Window and windshields," provides for the use of glass in airplanes but limits glass to windshields and instrument or display transparencies. Furthermore, except for bolted-in windshields, there is limited experience with either adhesive or mechanical retention methods for large glass objects installed in an airplane subject to high loads supported by flexible restraints.

The FAA has accepted the following uses of glass in the passenger cabin under the current regulations:

1. Glass items installed in rooms or areas in the cabin that are not occupied during taxi, take off, and landing, and occupants do not have to enter or pass through the room or area to get to any emergency exit.

2. Glass items integrated into a functional device whose operation is dependent upon the characteristics of glass, such as instrument or indicator protective transparencies, or monitor screens such as liquid crystal display (LCD) or plasma displays. These glass items may be installed in any area in the cabin regardless of occupancy during taxi, take-off, and landing. Acceptable means for these items may depend on the size and specific location of the device.

3. Small glass items installed in occupied rooms or areas during taxi, take off, and landing, or rooms or areas that occupants do have to enter or pass through to get to any emergency exit. For the purposes of these special conditions, a small glass item is less than 4 kg in mass or a group of glass items weighing less than 4 kg in mass.

The glass items in numbers one, two, and three (above) have been restricted to applications where the potential for injury is either highly localized (such as instrument faces) or the location is such that injury due to failure of the glass is unlikely (e.g., mirrors in lavatories). These glass items are subject to the inertia loads contained in § 25.561 and maximum positive differential pressure for items like monitors, but are not subject to these special conditions. They have been found acceptable through project specific means of compliance requiring testing to meet the requirement in § 25.785(d) and by adding a protective polycarbonate layer

that covers the glass exposed to the cabin.

The use of glass in airplanes utilizes the one unique characteristic of glass—its capability for undistorted or controlled light transmittance, or transparency. Glass, in its basic form as annealed, untreated sheet, plate, or float glass, when compared to metals, is extremely notch-sensitive, has a low fracture resistance, has a low modulus of elasticity, and can be highly variable in its properties. While reasonably strong, it is not a desirable material for traditional aircraft applications because, as a solo component, it is heavy (about the same density as aluminum). In addition, when glass fails, it can break into extremely sharp fragments that have the potential for injury above and beyond simple impact and have been known to be lethal.

The proposed special conditions address installing glass in much larger sizes than previously accepted and in a multitude of locations and applications, instead of using more traditional aircraft materials. In most, if not all cases, the glass will not be covered with a polycarbonate layer. Additionally, the retention of glass of this size and weight is not amenable to conventional techniques currently utilized in airplane cabins.

The proposed special conditions consider the unusual material properties of glass as an interior material that have limited or prevented its use in the past, and address the performance standards needed to ensure that those properties do not reduce the level of safety intended by the regulations. They address the use of large glass items installed in occupied rooms or areas during taxi, take off, and landing, or rooms or areas that occupants do have to enter or pass through to get to any emergency exit.

The proposed special conditions define a large glass component threshold of 4 kg, which is based on an assessment of the mass dislodged during a high “g” level (as defined in § 25.562) event. Groupings of glass components that total more than 4 kg would also need to be included. The applicable performance standards in the regulations for the installation of these components also apply and should not adversely affect the standards provided below. For example, heat release and smoke density testing should not result in fragmentation of the component.

For large glass components mounted in a cabin occupied by passengers or crew that are not otherwise protected from the injurious effects of failure of the glass component, the following apply:

Material. The glass used must be tempered or otherwise treated to ensure that when fractured, it breaks into small pieces with relatively dull edges. This must be demonstrated by testing to failure. Tests similar to ANSI/SAE Z26.1 section 5.7, Test 7 would be acceptable.

Fragmentation. The glass component construction must control the fragmentation of the glass to minimize the danger from flying glass shards or pieces. Impact and puncture testing to failure must demonstrate this. Tests similar to ANSI/SAE Z26.1 section 5.9, Test 9 adjusted to ensure cracking the glass would be acceptable.

Strength. The glass component, as installed in the airplane, must be strong enough to meet the load requirements for all flight and landing loads and all of the emergency landing conditions in subparts C and D of part 25. In addition, glass components that are located such that they are not protected from contact with cabin occupants must be designed for abusive loading without failure, such as impact from service carts, or occupants stumbling into, leaning against, sitting on, or performing other intentional or unintentional forceful contact. This must be demonstrated by static structural testing to ultimate load except that the critical loading condition must be tested to failure. The tested glass component must have all features that affect component strength, such as etched surfaces, cut or engraved designs, holes, and so forth.

Retention. The glass component, as installed in the airplane, must not come free of its restraint or mounting system in the event of an emergency landing. Based on the characteristics of a large glass component, dynamic tests should be performed to demonstrate that the occupants would be protected up to the load levels required by the certification basis of the airplane. A single test for the most critical loading for the installed component would be sufficient. This may be accomplished by using already accepted methods for dynamic testing.

Analysis may be used in lieu of testing if the applicant has validated the strength models and dynamic simulation models used against static tests to failure and dynamic testing to the above requirements and can predict structural failure and dynamic response and inertial load. The glass material properties must meet § 25.613, “Material strength properties and material design values.” The effect of design details, such as geometric discontinuities or surface finish, must be accounted for in the test/analysis.

Applicability

As discussed above, these special conditions are applicable to the Boeing Model 737–800. Should Lufthansa Technik apply at a later date for a supplemental type certificate to modify any other model included on Type Certificate No. A16WE to incorporate the same novel or unusual design feature, the special conditions would apply to that model as well.

Certification of the Boeing Model 737–800 is currently scheduled for June 2012. The substance of these special conditions has been previously subject to the notice and public-comment procedure. Therefore, because a delay would significantly affect both the applicant’s installation of the system and certification of the airplane, we are shortening the public-comment period to 20 days.

Conclusion

This action affects only certain novel or unusual design features on one model of airplanes. It is not a rule of general applicability, and it affects only the applicant who applied to the FAA for approval of these features on the airplane.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 25

Aircraft, Aviation safety, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

The authority citation for these special conditions is as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701, 44702, 44704.

The Proposed Special Conditions

Accordingly, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) proposes the following special conditions as part of the type certification basis for Boeing Model 737–800 airplanes modified by Lufthansa Technik AG. For these special conditions, a large glass component is 4 kg (approximately 10 pounds) and greater in mass, or a grouping of glass components that total more than 4 kg.

1. Boeing Model 737–800 Airplane; Large Non-Structural Glass in the Passenger Compartment. The airplane is not operated for hire or offered for common carriage. This provision does not preclude the operator from receiving remuneration to the extent consistent with 14 CFR parts 125 and 91, subpart F, as applicable.

2. *Material Fragmentation.* The glass used to fabricate the component must be tempered or treated to ensure that, when fractured, it breaks into small pieces with relatively dull edges. In addition, it must be shown that fragmentation of the glass is controlled to reduce the danger from flying glass shards or

pieces. This must be demonstrated by testing to failure.

3. *Component Strength.* The glass component must be strong enough to meet the load requirements for all flight and landing loads including any of the applicable emergency landing conditions in subparts C and D of part 25. Abuse loading without failure, such as impact from occupants stumbling into, leaning against, sitting on, or performing other intentional or unintentional forceful contact, must also be demonstrated. This must be demonstrated by static structural testing to ultimate load, except that the critical loading condition must be tested to failure in the as-installed condition. The tested glass must have all features that affect component strength, such as etched surfaces, cut or engraved designs, holes, and so forth. Glass pieces must be non-hazardous.

4. *Component Retention.* The glass component, as installed in the airplane, must not come free of its restraint or mounting system in the event of an emergency landing. A test must be performed to demonstrate that the occupants would be protected from the effects of the component failing or becoming free of restraint under dynamic loading. The dynamic loading of § 25.562(b)(2) is considered an acceptable dynamic event. The applicant may propose an alternate pulse; however, the impulse and peak load may not be less than that of § 25.562(b)(2). As an alternative to a dynamic test, static testing may be used if the loading is assessed as equivalent as or more critical than a dynamic test, based upon validated dynamic analysis. Both the primary directional loading and rebound conditions need to be assessed.

5. *Instructions for Continued Airworthiness.* The instructions for continued airworthiness will reflect the fastening method used and will ensure the reliability of the methods used (e.g., life limit of adhesives, or clamp connection). Inspection methods and intervals will be defined based upon adhesion data from the manufacturer of the adhesive or actual adhesion test data, if necessary.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 1, 2012.

Michael J. Kaszycki,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-11697 Filed 5-14-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD

29 CFR Part 1206

[Docket No. C-7034]

RIN 3140-ZA01

Representation Procedures and Rulemaking Authority

AGENCY: National Mediation Board.

ACTION: Proposed rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: This proposal amends the National Mediation Board's (NMB or Board) existing rules for handling representation disputes to incorporate statutory language added to or amending the Railway Labor Act (RLA) by the Federal Aviation Administration Modernization and Reform Act of 2012. This document proposes changes to the existing regulations pertaining to run-off elections, showing of interest for representation elections, and the NMB's rulemaking proceedings.

DATES: The NMB will accept written comments that are received on or before July 16, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Docket Number C-7034 by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Agency Web Site:* www.nmb.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Email:* legal@nmb.gov. Include docket number in the subject line of the message.
- *Fax:* (202) 692-5085.
- *Mail and Hand Delivery:* National Mediation Board, 1301 K Street NW., Ste. 250E, Washington, DC 20005.

Instructions: All submissions received must include the agency name and docket number. All comments received will be posted without change to www.nmb.gov, including any personal information provided.

Docket: For access to the docket or to read background documents or comments received, go to www.nmb.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Johnson, General Counsel, National Mediation Board, 202-692-5050, infoline@nmb.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On February 14, 2012, the President signed the Federal Aviation Administration Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, Public Law 112-095 (FAA Reauthorization) into law. The FAA Reauthorization contained, inter alia, several amendments to the RLA. The changes contained in these amendments

impact the Board's current Rules relating to run-off elections, showing of interest requirements, and rulemaking. These Rules are being revised to comply with the statutory language. As discussed below, the Board invites commenters to address specific questions below, along with any other matters they consider relevant to the changes wrought by the amended statutory language. The Board is particularly interested in receiving comments regarding the effect of the amendments on the Board's policies and practices with respect to representation disputes in mergers. The NMB may incorporate any comments in a Final Rule in this proceeding. The NMB will hold an open public hearing during the comment period. A notice will be published containing the dates of the open public hearing and related information.

Run-Off Elections

Prior to the enactment of the FAA Reauthorization, under its previous practice in representation elections, the Board aggregated all votes cast for representation, including write-in votes.¹ Where a majority of employees have cast valid ballots for representation but no individual or organization received a majority of the ballots cast, the issue to be determined was which of the individuals or organizations would be the representative. Thus, the run-off election, once authorized, would be between the two individuals or organizations that received the highest number of votes. 29 CFR 1206.1. The amendments to the RLA now require that the Board no longer aggregate votes for representation and that any run-off election will be between the two ballot options that receive the most votes. This can include the "no" option.

The Board's Rules also required that a participant initiate a run-off election with a written request. 29 CFR 1206.1. The amended language now requires the Board to "arrange for" a second election when no ballot option receives a majority of the ballots cast.

Showing of Interest

Prior to these amendments, the showing of interest requirements needed to support an application under Section 2, Ninth of the RLA invoking the Board's services to investigate a representation dispute among a carrier's

¹ The NMB has a longstanding practice of allowing write-in votes for representation. *International Total Services*, 16 NMB 231, 233 (1989) (rejecting union objection to inclusion of write-in option since the provision for write-in votes in NMB elections has remained largely unchanged for over 50 years).