

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737–57A1218, Revision 3, dated July 25, 2002. (Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737–57A1277, dated July 25, 2002, was referenced in the existing AD as the appropriate source of service information for accomplishment of the inspections to find discrepancies of each carriage spindle, and corrective action, if necessary.) Service Bulletin 737–57A1218 describes procedures for replacement or overhaul of each carriage spindle (two on each flap) of the left and right outboard mid-flaps. Such replacement or overhaul would end the repetitive inspections specified in Service Bulletin 737–57A1277. Accomplishment of the actions specified in Service Bulletin 737–57A1218 is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other products of this same type design, the proposed AD would supersede AD 2002–22–05 to continue to require repetitive inspections to find cracks, fractures, or corrosion of each carriage spindle of the left and right outboard mid-flaps; and corrective action, if necessary. This new action would mandate the previously optional overhaul or replacement of the carriage spindles, which would end the repetitive inspections required by the existing AD. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with Service Bulletin 737–57A1218, Revision 3, except as discussed below.

Difference Between Service Information and Proposed AD

The service bulletin references Boeing 737 Overhaul Manual, chapter 57–53–35 (for Model 737–100, –200, and –200C series airplanes), and chapter 57–53–36 (for Model 737–300, –400, and –500 series airplanes), for the procedures for the overhaul specified in the proposed AD. Those chapters reference Boeing 737 Standard Overhaul Practices Manual (SOPM) chapter 20–42–09, titled, “Electro-deposited Nickel Plating,” for the nickel plating procedures. The amount of nickel plating required to restore functional capability and part geometry have made certain processing steps critical within the plating process for the spindle region of the flap carriage. The processing steps are specified in

paragraph (d) of this AD, and are necessary to prevent structural failures of the carriage spindle due to hydrogen embrittlement. These processing steps have been identified by the manufacturer as critical details of the plating process, and Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737–57A1218, Revision 3, is being revised to reflect these requirements.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 3,132 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 1,384 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

The inspections that are currently required by AD 2002–22–05 take approximately 10 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the currently required inspections on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$830,400, or \$600 per airplane.

It would take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the new detailed inspection, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$166,080, or \$120 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Should an operator be required to accomplish the overhaul, it would take approximately 32 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the overhaul proposed by this AD is estimated to be \$1,920 per airplane.

Should an operator be required to accomplish the replacement, it would take approximately 32 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$45,000 per carriage spindle. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the replacement proposed by this AD is estimated to be \$46,920 per spindle, per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the current or 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 removing amendment 39–12929 (67 FR 66316, October 31, 2002), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), to read as follows:

Boeing: Docket 2002–NM–219–AD.

Supersedes AD 2002–22–05, Amendment 39–12929.

Applicability: All Model 737–100, –200, –200C, –300, –400, and –500 series airplanes; 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