

Titeflex Corporation, delivered to Boeing from November 1999 through January 2001, are suspect for improper heat treatment. Improperly heat treated B-nuts can lead to stress corrosion B-nut failure, and inadequate fire protection and fuel leakage. This condition, if not corrected, could result in fire extinguishing system and fuel system hose failure due to improperly heat treated aluminum B-nuts.

Manufacturer's Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved the technical contents of the following Boeing alert service bulletins (ASBs):

- ASB 737-26A1108, Revision 1, dated June 27, 2002, applicable to 737-300, -400, and -500 airplanes, that describes procedures for inspecting and replacing if necessary, Titeflex Corporation hoses connected to engine and cargo compartment fire extinguishing bottles.
- ASB 737-26A1109, Revision 1, dated November 7, 2002, applicable to 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, and -900 airplanes, that describes procedures for inspecting and replacing if necessary, Titeflex Corporation hoses connected to engine, auxiliary power unit (APU), and cargo compartment fire extinguishing bottles, and wing-to-strut fuel hoses.
- ASB 747-26A2269, Revision 1, dated June 6, 2002, applicable to 747-400, that describes procedures for inspecting and replacing if necessary, Titeflex Corporation hoses connected to forward cargo and main deck cargo compartment fire extinguishing bottles.
- ASB 757-26A0043, Revision 1, dated November 14, 2002, applicable to 757-200 airplanes, that describes procedures for inspecting and replacing if necessary, Titeflex Corporation hoses connected to engine, APU, and cargo compartment fire extinguishing bottles.
- ASB 757-26A0044, Revision 1, dated November 14, 2002, applicable to 757-300 airplanes, that describes procedures for inspecting and replacing if necessary, Titeflex Corporation hoses connected to engine and cargo compartment fire extinguishing bottles.
- ASB 767-26A0121, dated December 19, 2001, applicable to 767-200, -300, and -300F airplanes, that describes procedures for inspecting and replacing if necessary, Titeflex Corporation hoses connected to cargo compartment fire extinguishing bottles.

Differences Between This AD and the Manufacturer's Service Information

Although the ASBs recommend performing the inspections and replacing unserviceable hoses within 12 months after the initial release dates of ASB 737-26A1108, ASB 737-26A1109,

ASB 767-26A0121, and ASB 747-26A2269, and within 18 months after the initial release dates of ASB 757-26A0043 and ASB 757-26A0044, this proposal would require inspections and replacing unserviceable hoses to be done within 24 months after the effective date of the AD. This compliance time was substantiated by analysis by Boeing and coordinated between the FAA and Boeing to help coincide with parts availability.

FAA's Determination of an Unsafe Condition and Proposed Actions

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Titeflex Corporation hoses of the same type design, installed on Boeing 737-300, -400, -500, -600, -700, -700C, -800, -900, 747-400, 757-200, -300, 767-200, -300, and -300F airplanes, the proposed AD would require within 24 months after the effective date of the AD, inspection of hoses for proper date and paint code, replacement if necessary, and if necessary, inspection for proper heat treatment of aluminum B-nuts. The actions would be required to be done in accordance with the alert service bulletins described previously. This proposal has been coordinated with the FAA Transport Airplane Directorate.

Economic Analysis

The FAA estimates that 1,139 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD. The FAA also estimates that it would take approximately 35 work hours per airplane to perform the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$4,305 per engine. Based on these figures, the total cost of the proposed AD to U.S. operators is estimated to be \$7,295,295.

Regulatory Analysis

This proposed rule does not have federalism implications, as defined in Executive Order 13132, because it 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. Accordingly, the FAA has not consulted with state authorities prior to publication of this proposed rule.

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:

Titeflex Corporation: Docket No. 2002-NE-22-AD.

Applicability: This airworthiness directive (AD) is applicable to certain Titeflex Corporation hoses that are identified by Boeing part number (P/N), or for certain hoses, by Titeflex parts manufacturer approval (PMA) P/N in this AD. These hoses are used on, but not limited to Boeing 737-300, -400, -500, -600, -700, -700C, -800, and -900; 757-200 and -300; 767-200, -300, and -300F; and 747-400 airplanes.

Note 1: This AD applies to each hose 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 hoses 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 alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (f) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance

Compliance with this AD is required as indicated, unless already done.

To prevent fire extinguishing system and fuel system hose failure due to improperly heat treated aluminum B-nuts, do the following: