

Proposed Rules

Federal Register

Vol. 68, No. 69

Thursday, April 10, 2003

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-CE-15-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Short Brothers and Harland Ltd. Models SC-7 Series 2 and SC-7 Series 3 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to all Short Brothers and Harland Ltd. (Shorts) Models SC-7 Series 2 and SC-7 Series 3 airplanes. This proposed AD would require you to repetitively inspect all flight control system rods for corrosion and cracks, replace any cracked rod, and repair corrosion damage or replace any corroded rod depending on the extent of the damage. This proposed AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom. The actions specified by this proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of any flight control system rod caused by cracks or corrosion. Such failure could lead to complete failure of the flight control system with consequent loss of control of the airplane.

DATES: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) must receive any comments on this proposed rule on or before May 19, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments to FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-CE-15-AD, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. You may view any comments at this location between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may also send comments electronically to the following address:

9-ACE-7-Docket@faa.gov. Comments sent electronically must contain "Docket No. 2003-CE-15-AD" in the subject line. If you send comments electronically as attached electronic files, the files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII text.

You may get service information that applies to this proposed AD from Short Brothers PLC, P.O. Box 241, Airport Road, Belfast BT3 9DZ Northern Ireland; telephone: +44 (0) 28 9045 8444; facsimile: +44 (0) 28 9073 3396. You may also view this information at the Rules Docket at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Doug Rudolph, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329-4059; facsimile: (816) 329-4090.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

How do I comment on this proposed AD? The FAA invites comments on this proposed rule. You may submit whatever written data, views, or arguments you choose. You need to include the proposed rule's docket number and submit your comments to the address specified under the caption

ADDRESSES. We will consider all comments received on or before the closing date. We may amend this proposed rule in light of comments received. Factual information that supports your ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of this proposed AD action and determining whether we need to take additional rulemaking action.

Are there any specific portions of this proposed AD I should pay attention to? The FAA specifically invites comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed rule that might suggest a need to modify the rule. You may view all comments we receive before and after the closing date of the rule in the Rules Docket. We will file a report in the Rules Docket that summarizes each contact we have with the public that concerns the substantive parts of this proposed AD.

How can I be sure FAA receives my comment? If you want FAA to acknowledge the receipt of your mailed comments, you must include a self-addressed, stamped postcard. On the

postcard, write "Comments to Docket No. 2003-CE-15-AD." We will date stamp and mail the postcard back to you.

Discussion

What events have caused this proposed AD? The Civil Airworthiness Authority (CAA), which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom, recently notified FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all Models SC-7 Series 2 and SC-7 Series 3 airplanes. The CAA reports 27 flight control rods with corrosion beyond acceptable limits and 15 rods with cracks. This is on a total of 26 different aircraft.

What are the consequences if the condition is not corrected? Cracked or corroded flight control rods, if not detected or corrected, could lead to complete failure of the flight control system with consequent loss of control of the airplane.

Is there service information that applies to this subject? Shorts has issued Service Bulletin Number 27-77, Original Issue 27/FEB/03.

What are the provisions of this service information? This service bulletin includes procedures for:

- Inspecting all flight control rods for cracks or corrosion;
- Correcting corrosion damage that is not beyond the acceptable limits; and
- Replacing any cracked or corroded (past acceptable limits) control rods.

What action did the CAA take? The CAA classified this service bulletin as mandatory in order to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in the United Kingdom. The CAA classifying a service bulletin as mandatory is the equivalent for airplanes of British registry as an AD is for airplanes of American registry.

Was this in accordance with the bilateral airworthiness agreement? These airplane models are manufactured in the United Kingdom and are type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement.

Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the CAA has kept FAA informed of the situation described above.