

You may get service information that applies to this proposed AD from Pilatus Business Aircraft Ltd., Product Support Department, 11755 Airport Way, Broomfield, Colorado 80021; telephone: (303) 465-9099; facsimile: (303) 465-6040. You may also view this information at the Rules Docket at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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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. 2002-CE-51-AD." We will date stamp and mail the postcard back to you.

Discussion

What events have caused this proposed AD? The Federal Office for

Civil Aviation (FOCA), which is the airworthiness authority for Switzerland, recently notified FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Pilatus Models PC-12 and PC-12/45 airplanes. The FOCA reports that 3 aircraft experienced a failure of the nose landing gear (NLG) drag link assembly during cruise flight. The actuator attachment levers on the right-hand upper drag link part failed. In all cases, the NLG fell out due to gravity, and the emergency spring pack extended it forward and allowed safe landings.

What are the consequences if the condition is not corrected? Structural failure of the NLG drag link right-hand part could result in either an unintended NLG extension during flight or the NLG not properly locking upon extension. This could lead to loss of airplane control during landing operations.

Has FAA taken any action to this point? We issued a proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an AD that would apply to all Pilatus Models PC-12 and PC-12/45 airplanes. This proposal was published in the **Federal Register** as a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on December 18, 2002 (67 FR 77442). The NPRM proposed to require you to repetitively replace the nose landing gear (NLG) drag link right-hand part every 4,000 landings until an improved design NLG drag link right-hand part is installed. The NPRM also proposed to require you to install an improved design NLG drag link right-hand part as terminating action for the repetitive replacements.

You would have to accomplish the proposed actions in accordance with Service Bulletin No. 32-014, dated August 13, 2002.

Comment Issue No. 1: Landings Factor

What is the commenter's concern? The commenter requests correction of the proposed unknown landings factor (multiply time-in-service (TIS) by 0.5). The commenter explains that Pilatus has established for the Model PC-12 a factor of 45 minutes per landing (TIS divided by 0.75). Pilatus published this factor in Pilatus Aircraft Ltd. Service Bulletin 27-005, dated November 18, 1998, and the FOCA has approved this factor.

What is FAA's response to the concern? We concur with the commenter. Because revising this factor could increase the burden upon those

owners/operators who do not keep track of landings, we will reopen the comment period and issue a supplemental NPRM.

Comment Issue No. 2: Correct Version of Temporary Revision No. 32-14

What is the commenter's concern? The commenter notes that there are two versions of Pilatus Maintenance Manual (MM) Temporary Revision No. 32-14, both dated June 4, 2002. However, neither is referenced differently, except that the older version has eight pages and the current version has seven pages. The current seven-paged version is the version that was forwarded by the FOCA. This current version shows revision bars on pages 4, 6, and 7. The commenter requests identifying Temporary Revision No. 32-14 with seven pages as the correct version to use for the AD.

What is FAA's response to the concern? We concur with the commenter and will note the correct version to use.

The Supplemental NPRM

How will the changes to the NPRM impact the public? The more restrictive unknown landings factor (0.75) goes beyond the scope of what was earlier proposed and imposes a greater burden on the public. Therefore, we are issuing a supplemental NPRM and reopening the comment period to allow the public additional time to comment.

How does the revision to 14 CFR part 39 affect this proposed AD? On July 10, 2002, FAA published a new version of 14 CFR part 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs FAA's AD system. This regulation now includes material that relates to special flight permits, alternative methods of compliance, and altered products. This material previously was included in each individual AD. Since this material is included in 14 CFR part 39, we will not include it in future AD actions.

Cost Impact

How many airplanes would this proposed AD impact? We estimate that this proposed AD affects 265 airplanes in the U.S. registry.

What would be the cost impact of this proposed AD on owners/operators of the affected airplanes? We estimate the following costs to accomplish the proposed replacement with the same design part:

Labor cost	Parts cost	Total cost per airplane	Total cost on U.S. operators
6 workhours × \$60 per hour = \$360	\$1,000	\$1,360	\$1,360 × 265 = \$360,400.