

depreciation studies to determine the components of its depreciation rates. This rule will eliminate the requirement for a useful life determination based solely upon the depreciation rates as found in Bulletin 183-1. If the useful life being proposed by the borrower is not satisfactory to RUS, the depreciation rates listed in RUS Bulletin 183-1 will no longer be used in lieu thereof for loan term calculation. RUS will consider an independent evaluation, the manufacturer's estimated useful-life or RUS experience with like-property as alternatives to an unsatisfactory proposal made by the borrower. RUS views this new back-stop approach to reviewing and approving the determination of the useful life of a facility as a more appropriate method. The increased difficulties in establishing net salvage values and recent experience in using the fixed range of depreciation rates as found in Bulletin 183-1, dictates a more flexible approach.

This rule change was first issued as a proposed rule and published in the **Federal Register**, Vol. 67, No. 68, Tuesday, April 9, 2002. One comment was received in full support of the rule change and provided specific reasons why reliance on Bulletin 183-1 alone may not be the best method for determining the useful life of a facility. The RUS is making this change to regulations as part of its ongoing effort to minimize administrative burden, streamline the loan process, and update regulations to reflect current requirements. This change in regulations will provide greater latitude in establishing the useful life of a facility being financed but at the same time maintain RUS approval for making the determination.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 1710

Electric power, Electric utilities, Loan programs—energy, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Rural areas.

■ For the reasons set forth in the preamble, chapter XVII of title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, is amended as follows:

PART 1710—GENERAL AND PRE-LOAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES COMMON TO INSURED AND GUARANTEED ELECTRIC LOANS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 1710 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*, 1921 *et seq.*, 6941 *et seq.*

Subpart C—Loan Purposes and Basic Policies

■ 2. Amend § 1710.115 by revising paragraph (b) to read as follows:

§ 1710.115 Final maturity.

* * * * *

(b) Loans made or guaranteed by RUS for facilities owned by the borrower generally must be repaid with interest within a period, up to 35 years, that approximates the expected useful life of the facilities financed. The expected useful life shall be based on the weighted average of the useful lives that the borrower proposes for the facilities financed by the loan, provided that the proposed useful lives are deemed appropriate by RUS. RUS Form 740c, Cost Estimates and Loan Budget for Electric Borrowers, submitted as part of the loan application must include, as a note, either a statement certifying that at least 90 percent of the loan funds are for facilities that have a useful life of 33 years or longer, or a schedule showing the costs and useful life of those facilities with a useful life of less than 33 years. If the useful life determination proposed by the borrower is not deemed appropriate by RUS, RUS will base expected useful life on an independent evaluation, the manufacturer's estimated useful-life or RUS experience with like-property, as applicable. Final maturities for loans for the implementation of programs for demand side management and energy resource conservation and on and off grid renewable energy sources not owned by the borrower will be determined by RUS. Due to the uncertainty of predictions over an extended period of time, RUS may add up to 2 years to the composite average useful life of the facilities in order to determine final maturity.

* * * * *

Dated: March 17, 2003.

Hilda Gay Legg,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 03-11241 Filed 5-6-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 25

[Docket No. NM251, Special Conditions No. 25-234-SC]

Special Conditions: Raytheon HS.125 Series 700A/B Airplanes; High Intensity Radiated Fields (HIRF)

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final special conditions; request for comments.

SUMMARY: These special conditions are issued for Raytheon HS.125A Series 700A/B airplanes, modified by Midcoast Aviation, Inc. These modified airplanes will have a novel or unusual design feature when compared to the state of technology envisioned in the airworthiness standards for transport category airplanes. The modification incorporates the installation of dual Rockwell Collins Air Data Computers (ADC-87A) and ALI-80A altimeters. The applicable airworthiness regulations do not contain adequate or appropriate safety standards for the protection of these systems from the effects of high-intensity radiated fields (HIRF). These special conditions contain the additional safety standards that the Administrator considers necessary to establish a level of safety equivalent to that provided by the existing airworthiness standards.

DATES: The effective date of these special conditions is April 22, 2003. Comments must be received on or before June 6, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments on these special conditions may be mailed in duplicate to: Federal Aviation Administration, Transport Airplane Directorate, Attn: Rules Docket (ANM-113), Docket No. NM251, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington, 98055-4056; or delivered in duplicate to the Transport Airplane Directorate at the above address. All comments must be marked: Docket No. NM251.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Greg Dunn, FAA, Airplane and Flight Crew Interface Branch, ANM-111, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington, 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2799; facsimile (425) 227-1320.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

FAA Determination as to Need for Public Process

The FAA has determined that notice and opportunity for prior public