

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION****Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 2001–NM–358–AD; Amendment 39–13163; AD 2003–11–04]

RIN 2120–AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10–10, DC–10–10F, DC–10–15, DC–10–30, DC–10–30F, DC–10–30F (KC–10A and KDC–10), DC–10–40, and DC–10–40F Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas airplanes, that requires inspections of the linear variable differential transducers (LVDTs) of the autopilot for discrepancies, and follow-on actions if necessary. This amendment is prompted by information from the manufacturer advising that certain LVDTs were delivered with an undersize nylok element on the threaded extension. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent failure of the LVDTs, which could result in an automatic pitch trim malfunction or an autopilot disconnect, and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

**DATES:** Effective July 3, 2003.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of July 3, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Aircraft Group, Long Beach Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Data and Service Management, Dept. C1–L5A (D800–0024). This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ron Atmur, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood,

California 90712–4137; telephone (562) 627–5224; fax (562) 627–5210.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A

proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10–10, DC–10–10F, DC–10–15, DC–10–30, DC–10–30F, DC–10–30F (KC–10A and KDC–10), DC–10–40, and DC–10–40F airplanes was published as a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) in the **Federal Register** on March 17, 2003 (68 FR 12618). That action proposed to require inspections of the linear variable differential transducers (LVDTs) of the autopilot for discrepancies, and follow-on actions if necessary. That action also proposed to expand the applicability of the original NPRM.

**Comments**

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were submitted in response to the proposal or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public.

**Conclusion**

The FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed in the supplemental NPRM.

**Changes to 14 CFR Part 39/Effect on the AD**

On July 10, 2002, the FAA issued a new version of 14 CFR part 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs the FAA's airworthiness directives system. The regulation now includes material that relates to altered products, special flight permits, and alternative methods of compliance. However, for clarity and consistency in this final rule, we have retained the language of the supplemental NPRM regarding that material.

**Cost Impact**

There are approximately 394 Model DC–10–10, DC–10–10F, DC–10–15, DC–10–30, DC–10–30F, DC–10–30F (KC–10A and KDC–10), DC–10–40, and DC–10–40F airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 252 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD.

We estimate that it will take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the inspection specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC10–22A126, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of that inspection required by this AD on U.S. operators is

estimated to be \$15,120, or \$60 per airplane.

We estimate that it will take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the inspections specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC10–22A127, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of these inspections required by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$15,120, or \$60 per airplane.

Should an operator be required to perform the follow-on actions specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC10–22A126, the cost estimates are as follows:

- Condition 2–Repair/inspect: 1 work hour per airplane at \$60 per work hour.
- Condition 4–Realign: 1 work hour per airplane at \$60 per work hour.
- Condition 5–Replace LVDT: 1 work hour per airplane at \$60 per work hour; estimated parts cost of \$900.
- Condition 6–Replace hangar: 1 work hour per airplane at \$60 per work hour; estimated parts cost of \$100.

Should an operator be required to perform the follow-on actions specified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC10–22A127, the cost estimates are as follows:

- Option 1–Replace LVDT and do adjustment/test: 2 work hours per airplane at \$60 per work hour; estimated parts cost of \$900.
- Option 2–Install a heat shrinkable sleeve and inspect: 2 work hours per airplane at \$60 per work hour.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the 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 adopted herein will 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 final rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (1) is not a