

of the comments received. Submit comments using the following format:

- Organize comments issue-by-issue. For example, discuss a request to change the compliance time and a request to change the service bulletin reference as two separate issues.
- For each issue, state what specific change to the proposed AD is being requested.
- Include justification (e.g., reasons or data) for each request.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this action must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 2002-NM-06-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-06-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports of water and subsequent corrosion in the barrel nut holes in the area where the outer sections attach to the center section on the left and right sides of the upper horizontal stabilizer on certain MD-11 and -11F airplanes. In one incident, the sealant installed in the barrel nut hole had raised partially out, and severe corrosion was found when the sealant was removed. In two other incidents, removal of the mylar tape and sealant showed that the barrel nut holes were filled with water; investigation revealed that condensation accumulated in the barrel nut holes during flight. Such conditions, if not corrected, could result in structural damage and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Service Bulletin MD11-55-023, including Appendix A and Evaluation

Form, dated November 28, 2001, which describes procedures for a one-time inspection of the barrel nut holes of the upper spar caps and skin panel of the horizontal stabilizer for corrosion, and follow-on and corrective actions. The follow-on and corrective actions include but are not limited to the following:

- Condition 1—If no corrosion is found, the service bulletin describes procedures to clean, seal, and tape the barrel nut holes per Figure 4 of the service bulletin;
- Condition 2—If corrosion is found that does not exceed the limits specified in Figure 2 of the service bulletin, the service bulletin describes procedures to remove and retain the barrel nuts and bolts, remove the corrosion, and seal and tape the affected barrel nut holes per Figure 2 of the service bulletin; or
- Condition 3—If corrosion is found that does not exceed 0.060 inch on the barrel nut bottom, the service bulletin describes procedures to remove and retain the barrel nuts and bolts, remove the corrosion, fabricate and install bushings, seal and tape the holes, and reinstall the barrel nuts and bolts per Figures 2 of the service bulletin. If corrosion is found in the barrel nut bearing area and/or corrosion exceeds the dimensional limits for each hole, the service bulletin specifies contacting the manufacturer for repair disposition.

The service bulletin also references the procedures in the MD-11 Airplane Maintenance Manual and the Structural Repair Manual for the accomplishment of certain follow-on actions.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other products of this same type design, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously, except that the proposed AD would not require completing the Evaluation Form, and except as discussed below.

Differences Between This Proposed Rule and the Service Information

The service bulletin refers to a "visual" inspection. For the purposes of this AD, we have determined that the procedures in the service bulletin constitute a "detailed inspection." Note 2 of this proposed AD defines such an inspection.

Although the service bulletin specifies that the manufacturer may be contacted for disposition of certain repairs, this proposed AD would require such repairs to be accomplished per a method approved by the FAA.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 191 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 66 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 6 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection proposed by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$23,760, or \$360 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this proposed 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 proposed herein 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. Therefore, it is determined that this proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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