

repetitive inspections for discrepancies of the collar fittings, torque tube, and splined bushings on both inboard trailing edge flaps; and follow-on and corrective actions, if necessary. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the collar fittings, which could result in separation of the inboard trailing edge flap and consequent reduced controllability of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by February 18, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001-NM-395-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227-1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: 9-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2001-NM-395-AD" in the subject line and need not be submitted in triplicate. Comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII text.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Masterson, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2772; fax (425) 227-1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained

in this action may be changed in light 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 2001-NM-395-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. 2001-NM-395-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

On October 21, 1998, the FAA issued AD 98-22-12, amendment 39-10859 (63 FR 57577, October 28, 1998), applicable to certain Boeing Model 767 series airplanes, to require repetitive detailed inspections to detect cracked, corroded, or stained collar fittings on both inboard trailing edge flaps; and follow-on corrective actions, if necessary. That action was prompted by a report indicating that a collar fitting suffered a complete fracture as a result of stress corrosion cracking. The requirements of that AD are intended to prevent separation of the inboard trailing edge flap from the airplane due to fractured collar fittings.

In the preamble to AD 98-22-12, the FAA indicated that the actions required by that AD were considered "interim action" and that further rulemaking action was being considered. We now have determined that further rulemaking action is indeed necessary,

and this proposed AD follows from that determination.

Actions Since Issuance of Previous Rule

Since the issuance of AD 98-22-12, the airplane manufacturer has received reports indicating corrosion of the splined components of the inboard support of the trailing edge flap. The root cause of the corrosion was determined to be a breakdown of the MIL-G-23827 grease in the joint, which subsequently allowed moisture to enter the joint. Eventually, the splined components corroded and, in two instances, stress corrosion cracking of one component occurred. We now have determined that it is necessary to require additional inspections on airplanes affected by the existing AD and to expand the applicability of the existing AD to include airplanes that were assembled with the corrosion inhibiting compound (CIC) BMS 3-27 and delivered before the Maintenance Planning Document (MPD) was revised by the manufacturer in April 1999. The MPD was revised to include the 12-year/24,000-flight-cycle teardown inspection as part of normal airplane maintenance for airplanes assembled with BMS 3-27.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

We have reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-57A0066, Revision 3, including Appendices A and B, dated December 19, 2001, and Evaluation Form. (The existing AD shows Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-57A0066, Revision 1, dated August 6, 1998, as the appropriate source of service information for accomplishment of the actions required by that AD.) Revision 3 of the service bulletin adds Part 5—Titanine Inspection and Rework, which describes procedures for doing Part 1-Inspection, Part 3-Spline Inspection, and Part 4-Spline Rework; then repeating the spline inspection at the intervals specified if it is determined that the CIC Titanine JC5A was used per Revision 2 of the service bulletin, dated February 18, 1999, or if the maintenance records are inconclusive on the type of CIC used. Subsequent to issuance of Revision 2 of the service bulletin, it was determined that Titanine JC5A does not provide adequate corrosion protection for the joints specified in the service bulletin. Revision 3 of the service bulletin also describes procedures for light wear rework of the splines if no corrosion or corrosion pits are found, in lieu of a complete spline evaluation and overhaul. Appendix A, titled "Guide for Determining the Level of Rework Required," was added to assist operators