

### 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 2002-NM-74-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-74-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

### Discussion

As part of its practice of re-examining all aspects of the service experience of a particular aircraft whenever an accident occurs, the FAA has become aware of incidents of smoke and electrical odor in the flight compartment and cabin area of McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-81, -82, and -83 airplanes. Investigation revealed that long-term use and breakdown of the

internal components of circuit breakers manufactured by Wood Electric Corporation or Wood Electric Division of Potter Brumfield Corporation contributed to internal overheating and arcing of the circuit breakers. This condition, if not corrected, could result in smoke and fire in the flight compartment and main cabin.

The circuit breakers on certain Model MD-11 and MD-11F airplanes may be the same as those on the affected McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-81, -82, and -83 airplanes. Therefore, these models may be subject to this same unsafe condition.

### Other Related Rulemaking

The FAA, in conjunction with Boeing and operators of Model MD-11 and MD-11F airplanes, has reviewed all aspects of the service history of those airplanes to identify potential unsafe conditions and to take appropriate corrective actions. This proposed airworthiness directive (AD) is one of a series of corrective actions identified during that process. We have previously issued several other ADs and may consider further rulemaking actions to address the remaining identified unsafe conditions.

### Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD11-24A137, Revision 01, dated March 11, 2003 (the original issue of the service bulletin specified installation of incorrect circuit breakers for the Wood Electric circuit breakers, if installed). Revision 01 of the service bulletin describes procedures for a one-time visual inspection to determine if discrepant circuit breakers are installed (includes circuit breakers manufactured by Wood Electric and Wood Electric Division of Potter Brumfield Corporations, and incorrect circuit breakers installed per Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD11-24A137, dated February 28, 2002), and replacement of any discrepant circuit breaker with a new, approved circuit breaker. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

### 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 Revision 01 of the service

bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

### Difference Between This Proposed AD and the Service Bulletin

Although the service bulletin recommends that inspection be done within 18 months after release of the service bulletin, this AD would require a compliance time of within 24 months after the effective date of the proposed AD. We have determined that the proposed compliance time will better accommodate the time necessary for affected operators to schedule the work to be done without adversely affecting safety, and will allow the inspection to be performed at a base during regularly scheduled maintenance where special equipment and trained maintenance personnel will be available if necessary.

### Clarification of Compliance Time for Circuit Breaker Replacement

We have confirmed that there could be a parts availability problem due to the fact that the number of discrepant circuit breakers on each airplane cannot be determined without accomplishing the proposed inspection. If there is a large number of suspect circuit breakers found during the inspection, there may not be sufficient parts available to return the airplane to service. Therefore, we have determined that the compliance time for replacement of affected circuit breakers, which would normally be before further flight after discrepant circuit breakers are found, will be at the next scheduled maintenance visit, but not later than 24 months after the effective date of the proposed AD.

### Cost Impact

There are approximately 193 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 69 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 80 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection of the circuit breakers (over 700 installed on each airplane), and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$331,200, or \$4,800 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.