

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, PO 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:** Dennis Stremick, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 917-6450; fax (425) 917-6590.

**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-370-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-370-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

**Discussion**

On September 28, 2000, the FAA issued AD 2000-20-09, amendment 39-11920 (65 FR 59703, October 6, 2000), applicable to certain Boeing Model 757 series airplanes, that requires modification of the nacelle strut and wing structure. The requirements of that AD are intended to prevent fatigue cracking in primary strut structure and consequent reduced structural integrity of the strut.

**Actions Since Issuance of Previous Rule**

Since the issuance of AD 2000-20-09, the airplane manufacturer has done a new structural reassessment of the upper link of the strut of Boeing Model 757 series airplanes powered by Pratt & Whitney engines. This reassessment indicates that certain design changes are needed on the upper link to ensure that fatigue cracking does not occur on the primary strut structure before an airplane reaches its design service objective of 20 years, or 50,000 flight cycles. Analysis indicates that such cracking, if it were to occur, would grow at a much greater rate than originally expected. Fatigue cracking in primary strut structure would result in reduced structural integrity of the strut.

The compliance time for the modification of the upper link (Boeing Service Bulletin 757-54-0036, dated May 14, 1998) required by paragraph (b) of AD 2000-20-09, has been reduced due to this new structural assessment.

**Explanation of New Relevant Service Information**

We have reviewed and approved Boeing Service Bulletin 757-54-0034, Revision 1, dated October 11, 2001. (Boeing Service Bulletin 757-54-0034, dated May 14, 1998, was referenced as the appropriate source of service information for the actions required by paragraph (a) of AD 2000-20-09.) We find that the changes incorporated in Revision 1 of the service bulletin are not substantive, meaning that airplanes modified per the original issue of the service bulletin are not subject to any additional work under Revision 1 of the service bulletin. Therefore, we have added Revision 1 of the service bulletin as another source of service information for the accomplishment of the modification required by paragraph (a) of this AD.

**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 supersede AD 2000-20-09 to continue to require modification of the nacelle strut and wing structure. This new action proposes to reduce a certain compliance time in the existing AD. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletins described previously, and as discussed below.

**Difference Between This Proposed AD and Service Bulletin 757-54-0036**

This proposed AD would add a grace period of 2 years to the thresholds recommended in the service bulletin for accomplishment of the modification of the upper link and wire support bracket of the strut, as specified in paragraph (d) of this AD, as follows: Prior to the accumulation of 27,000 total flight cycles (for Model 757-200 series airplanes) or 29,000 total flight cycles (for Model 757-200PF series airplanes), or within 2 years after the effective date of this AD, whichever is later.

**Cost Impact**

There are approximately 317 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 278 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD. Since this proposed AD would merely reduce the compliance time for certain actions required by AD 2000-20-09 (Service Bulletin 757-54-0036), it would add no additional costs, and would require no additional work to be performed by affected operators. The current costs associated with AD 2000-20-09 are reiterated in their entirety (as follows) for the convenience of affected operators:

It will take approximately 800 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required modification of the nacelle strut and wing structure described in Boeing Service Bulletin 757-54-0034, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts will be provided at no cost by the airplane manufacturer. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this required modification on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$13,344,000, or \$48,000 per airplane.

It will take approximately 26 work hours per airplane to accomplish the actions described in Boeing Service Bulletin 757-54-0027, Revision 1, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Required parts will be provided at no cost by the airplane manufacturer.