

the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by August 4, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001-NM-238-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-238-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, 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:** Tamara Anderson, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 917-6421; 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-238-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-238-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports indicating that fatigue cracking has been found on the wing on several Boeing Model 747-100 and 747-200B series airplanes. The cracking is adjacent and common to the upper chord and splice fittings of the rear spar of the wing. Such cracking, if not corrected, could result in loss of structural integrity of the airplane.

The subject area on Model 747-100B, 747-100B SUD, 747-200F, 747-200C, 747-300, 747SR, and 747SP series airplanes is similar to that on the affected Model 747-100 and 747-200B series airplanes. Therefore, all of these airplanes may be subject to the same unsafe condition.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-57A2314, Revision 1, dated January 9, 2003, which describes procedures for repetitive inspections for discrepancies of the structure near and common to the upper chord and splice fittings of the rear spar of the wing, and repair if necessary. The inspection procedures include removing existing bolts; performing an ultrasonic or magnetic particle inspection for cracking of removed H-11 bolts; performing a detailed inspection of all other removed bolts for cracking, corrosion, or damage;

replacing cracked, corroded, or damaged bolts with new improved bolts; removing any installed repair bushings; performing an open-hole high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection for cracking of the bolt holes; installing new bushings if necessary; reinstalling bolts that are not cracked, corroded, or damaged; torquing the nuts; performing a detailed inspection of the shim between the kick fitting and bulkhead strap for cracking or migration; and replacing the shim with a new shim if necessary. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

The service bulletin also describes procedures for an optional modification, which involves removing installed repair bushings, performing an open-hole HFEC inspection for cracking of the bolt holes, repairing any cracking that is found, oversizing bolt holes, and installing new improved bolts.

Accomplishment of the optional modification eliminates the need for the repetitive inspections described previously, but necessitates eventual post-modification inspections. The post-modification inspections involve procedures similar to those for the pre-modification inspections, which were described previously.

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 as discussed below under the heading "Differences Between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletin."

Clarification of Credit for Actions Accomplished Previously

Flag Note 1 of the logic diagram in Figure 1 of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-57A2314, Revision 1, specifies that, for certain fastener holes on certain airplanes, an inspection per Figure 4, Step 14, of Boeing Service Bulletin 747-57-2110 is considered acceptable for compliance with the initial inspection specified in paragraph (a) of this proposed AD. We have reviewed and approved Boeing Service Bulletin 747-57-2110, Revision 6, dated November 21, 1991; and Revision 7, dated April 23, 1998; and have determined that accomplishment of an initial inspection before the effective date of this AD per Figure 4, Step 14, of one of those revisions of the service bulletin would provide an acceptable level of safety.