

rule would require installing the new parts, but is not mandatory. Therefore, no extension is necessary in order to obtain parts.

In developing an appropriate compliance time for this action, we considered not only the degree of urgency associated with addressing the subject unsafe condition, but the manufacturer's recommendation as to an appropriate compliance time, and the practical aspect of accomplishing the required inspections within an interval of time that parallels normal scheduled maintenance for the majority of affected operators. However, under the provisions of paragraph (i) of the final rule, we may approve requests for adjustments to the compliance time if data are submitted to substantiate that such an adjustment would provide an acceptable level of safety.

#### **Parts Availability**

One commenter states a concern for the availability of improved fittings for replacement. The commenter notes that, due to warranty, it anticipates replacing any fittings that do not exhibit the tool runout option, regardless of the inspection results.

We have been assured by the parts manufacturer that a sufficient number of replacement parts is available. However, this may not cover all parts without the tool runout option, regardless of the condition of the parts. If the commenter expects to replace a large number of parts, ordering the parts in advance so the manufacturer has time to produce adequate replacement parts is recommended.

#### **Request To Provide a Method To Identify Certain Fittings**

One commenter states that the proposed AD specifies that certain part numbers may not be installed on any aircraft unless the requirements of the proposed AD have been accomplished. The commenter notes that neither the proposed AD nor the referenced service bulletins provide instructions on how to identify fittings that have met the requirements of the proposed AD.

Although the commenter does not make a specific request, we infer that the commenter wants the FAA to provide instructions in the final rule for identification of the fittings that meet the AD requirements. We do not agree that such additional instructions are necessary because it is the operator's responsibility to show documented compliance to the requirements of the AD. If a spare part is installed on an airplane, and the previous inspection history of the part is not documented, the applicable inspection must be done

and must be repeated at the intervals required by this AD. Paragraph (h) of the proposed AD identifies the part numbers for fittings that cannot be installed unless the applicable requirements of the AD have been accomplished for that fitting. Those requirements are specified in paragraphs (a) through (f) of the AD. No change is made to the final rule in this regard.

#### **Request To Change Cost Impact Section**

One commenter estimates that the detailed visual and eddy current inspections specified in the proposed AD take 15 work hours per airplane to do, at a cost of \$117,000 for the operator's fleet.

Although the commenter does not make a specific request, we infer that the commenter wants the work hours and cost for the detailed visual and eddy current inspections specified in the Cost Impact section to be changed. We do not agree to change the number of estimated work hours for the inspections. The number of work hours necessary to accomplish the inspections, specified as 5 in the cost impact information, is consistent with the service bulletin. This number represents the time necessary to perform only the inspections actually required by this AD. Therefore, no change is made to the final rule in this regard.

#### **Request To Clarify Applicability**

One commenter would like to obtain clarification of the applicability specified in the proposed AD relative to airplanes in the Model 767-400 fleet having fuselage numbers 875 (variable number VQ085) and 877 (variable number VQ086), which are not listed in the applicability section. The commenter states that, according to the effectivity in the original issue of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-57A0079, dated June 20, 2002, only an airplane having fuselage number 877 is not affected by the proposed AD.

The terminology "fuselage numbers" actually refers to airplane line numbers, rather than the terminology used by the commenter for tracking its airplanes. Boeing Airplane Information Report dated October 2, 2002, shows Model 767 line number 875 as having variable number VS701, line number 876 having variable number VQ085, line number 877 having variable number VS721, and line number 878 having variable number VQ086; these figures do not match the variable numbers provided by the commenter. Regardless, the line numbers specified in the proposed AD and the referenced service bulletin are

correct. No change is made to the final rule in this regard.

#### **Request To Clarify Certain Wording in Paragraph (c)**

One commenter asks that the last sentence in paragraph (c) of the proposed AD be changed for clarification from "This AD requires that the terminating action, if required, be accomplished before further flight" to "This AD requires that the terminating action, if required because cracks have been found, be accomplished before further flight." The commenter states that it is not explicit in paragraph (c) that the terminating action is required only if cracks are found. The commenter adds that specifying the need to accomplish terminating action before further flight, without explicitly referencing cracks, may confuse the operator.

We do not agree with the commenter. Paragraph (c) of the proposed AD merely clarifies that, if the referenced service bulletins specify corrective action (i.e., if cracked or fractured fittings are found, do Part 3—Terminating Action), such action is required before further flight. No change is made to the final rule in this regard.

#### **Conclusion**

After careful review of the available data, including the comments noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule with the change previously described. The FAA has determined that this change will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

#### **Cost Impact**

There are approximately 783 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 354 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD.

It will take approximately 2 work hours per airplane to accomplish the detailed inspection, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this action is estimated to be \$42,480, or \$120 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

It will take approximately 5 work hours per airplane to accomplish the detailed visual and eddy current inspections, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of these actions is estimated to be \$106,200, or \$300 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of