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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002-NM-152-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 767-200, -300, and -300F Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Boeing Model 767-200, -300, and -300F series airplanes. This proposal would require modification of the aft pitch load fitting of the diagonal brace of the nacelle strut of each wing. This action is necessary to prevent loss of the fuse pin of the pitch load fitting due to fatigue caused by improper clearance between the fuse pin and bushing, which could result in increased loads in the wing-to-strut joints and consequent separation of the strut and engine from the wing. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by August 25, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-152-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. 2002-NM-152-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 or 2000 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, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 917-6441; 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 2002-NM-152-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-152-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports indicating that, during production, excessive clearance between the fuse pin and the bushing of the aft pitch load fitting of the diagonal brace of the nacelle strut of the wing was found on certain Model 767 series airplanes. Such improper clearance may lead to reduced fatigue life and potential loss of the fuse pin, which could result in increased loads in the wing-to-strut joints and consequent separation of the strut and engine from the wing.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-54A0102, dated November 8, 2001, which describes procedures for modification of the aft pitch load fitting of the diagonal brace of the nacelle strut of each wing. The modification includes, among other things, doing dye penetrant inspections for cracking or damage of the fitting; reworking the fitting if cracking or damage is found; honing, chamfering, measuring, and machining the fitting if no cracking or damage is found; and replacing the bushing and fuse pin. Replacement of the existing bushing with a bushing having a smaller inner diameter, and replacement of the fuse pin with a new fuse pin, will ensure that the proper clearance between the fuse pin and bushing of the aft pitch load fitting of the diagonal brace is maintained. Consequently, the fuse pin will retain its designed fatigue life. 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 the service bulletin described previously.

Changes to 14 CFR Part 39/Effect on the Proposed AD

On July 10, 2002, the FAA issued a new version of 14 CFR part 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs the