

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 2003–NM–152–AD; Amendment 39–13223; AD 2003–14–04]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737–200, 737–300, 737–400, 737–500, 737–600, 737–700, 737–800, 737–900, 757–200, and 757–300 Series Airplanes; and McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10–10F, DC–10–30, DC–10–30F, DC–10–40, MD–10–30F, MD–11, and MD–11F Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain transport category airplanes as listed above. This action requires modification of the reinforced flight deck door installed on the airplane. This action is necessary to prevent inadvertent release of the decompression latch and consequent opening of the decompression panel in the flight deck door. If an airplane crewmember is in close proximity to the flight deck door when the decompression panel opens, the decompression panel could hit and injure the crewmember. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Effective July 25, 2003.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of July 25, 2003.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before September 8, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003–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-iacomment@faa.gov. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain “Docket No. 2003–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 this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124–2207; or C & D Aerospace, 5701 Bolsa Avenue, Huntington Beach, California 92647–2063. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; at the FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ron Atmur, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712–4137; telephone (562) 627–5224; fax (562) 627–5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA has received several reports of incidents involving the reinforced flight deck door on certain Boeing Model 737–300, 737–500, 737–800, and 757–200 series airplanes. In these incidents, slamming the flight deck door caused the decompression latch to release and the decompression panel in the door to open. This condition, if not corrected, could result in the decompression panel hitting and injuring an airplane crewmember, if the crewmember is in close proximity to the flight deck door when the decompression panel opens.

The decompression latches for the reinforced flight deck doors on certain Boeing Model 737–200, 737–400, 737–600, 737–700, 737–900, and 757–300 series airplanes; and certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10–10F, DC–10–30, DC–10–30F, DC–10–40, MD–10–30F, MD–11, and MD–11F airplanes; are identical to those on the affected Model 737–300, 737–500, 737–800, and 757–200 series airplanes. Therefore, all of these models may be subject to the same unsafe condition.

The subject reinforced flight deck doors meet the ballistics and intrusion resistance security requirements of Section 25.795 (“Security Considerations”) of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 25.795) when the door is properly closed, latched, and locked. The possibility that the decompression panel may open if the door is slammed shut is unrelated to the flight deck door’s ballistics and intrusion resistance characteristics.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved C & D Aerospace Service Bulletin B221001–52–03, Revision 3, dated March 25, 2003, which applies to certain Boeing Model 737–200, –300, –400, –500, –600, –700, –800, and –900 series airplanes; and C & D Aerospace Service Bulletin B231001–52–02, Revision 4, dated March 19, 2003, which applies to certain Boeing Model 757–200 and –300 series airplanes. Those service bulletins describe procedures for modifying the reinforced flight deck door by, among other things, modifying the upper and lower pressure relief latch assemblies. The procedures for modifying the upper pressure relief latch assembly include removing the upper pressure relief latch assembly and spacer, installing a new decompression latch strap, reinstalling the existing upper pressure relief latch assembly and spacer, and installing a new pressure relief latch spacer. The procedures for modifying the lower pressure relief latch assembly involve removing the lower pressure relief latch cover, latch assembly, and spacer; installing a new decompression latch strap; reinstalling the existing lower pressure relief latch assembly, spacer, and cover; and installing a new pressure relief latch spacer.

The FAA has also reviewed and approved C & D Aerospace Service Bulletin B211200–52–02, Revision 1, dated June 3, 2003, which applies to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10–10F, DC–10–30, DC–10–30F, DC–10–40, MD–10–30F, MD–11, and MD–11F airplanes. That service bulletin describes procedures for modifying the reinforced flight deck door by, among other things, installing spacers in the upper and lower pressure relief latch assemblies. The procedures for installing the spacers include removing the upper pressure relief latch strap and the upper and lower pressure relief latch assemblies and spacers, installing new spacers, and reinstalling the existing upper pressure relief latch strap, and the upper and lower pressure relief latch assemblies and spacers.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in the applicable service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

Explanation of the Requirements of the Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, this AD requires accomplishment