

Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(g) This amendment becomes effective on August 25, 2003.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on July 8, 2003.

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Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003-CE-04-AD; Amendment 39-13239; AD 2003-14-20]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; AeroSpace Technologies of Australia Pty Ltd. Models N22B and N24A Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment supersedes Airworthiness Directive (AD) 82-12-06, which applies to certain AeroSpace Technologies of Australia Pty Ltd. (ASTA) Models N22B and N24A airplanes. AD 82-12-06 currently requires repetitive visual inspections of all rudder control lever shaft assemblies for cracks and discrepancies, and, if cracks or discrepancies are found, it requires replacement with new or serviceable rudder control shafts, and a check of the fit of all rod end bearings in lever shafts. AD 82-12-06 also allows you to inspect all lever shafts by magnetic particle inspection or dye penetrant methods as terminating action for the repetitive visual inspections. This AD is the result of recent reports of failures of the upper control lever torque shaft due to fatigue loading on the affected airplanes, including those that included the terminating actions. This AD requires more detailed repetitive inspections (than there are in AD 82-12-06) of the upper and lower rudder pedal torque shafts and a one-time inspection for discrepancies in the thickness of the lever shaft side plates with appropriate follow-up action. The actions specified by this AD are intended to detect and correct cracks in the rudder control lever torque shafts and discrepancies in the thickness of the lever shaft side plates, which could result in failure of the rudder control lever torque shaft. Such failure could

lead to reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: This AD becomes effective on September 8, 2003.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations as of September 8, 2003.

ADDRESSES: You may get the service information referenced in this AD from Nomad Operations, Aerospace Support Division, Boeing Australia, PO Box 767, Brisbane, QLD 4000 Australia; telephone 61 7 3306 3366; facsimile 61 7 3306 3111. You may view this information at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-CE-04-AD, 901 Locust, Room 506, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; 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, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone (562) 627-5224; facsimile (562) 627-5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

Has FAA taken any action to this point? Reports of cracking and other discrepancies on rudder control lever shaft assemblies on certain ASTA Models N22B and N24A airplanes caused us to issue AD 82-12-06, Amendment 39-4399. AD 82-12-06 currently requires the following on certain ASTA Models N22B and N24A airplanes:

- Repetitively inspecting visually all rudder control lever shafts for cracking;
- If cracks are found, before further flight, replacing with new or serviceable rudder control shafts;
- Checking for clearance of the fit of all rod end bearings in lever shafts; and
- Discontinuing the repetitive visual inspections when lever shafts are inspected either by magnetic particle inspection or dye penetrant methods.

What has happened since AD 82-12-06 to initiate this proposed action? The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), which is the airworthiness authority for Australia, recently notified FAA of the need to change AD 82-12-06. The CASA reports failures of the rudder control lever shaft. All the failures have occurred during ground operations and nosewheel steering/rudder loads are now considered the primary cause of the failure.

Some of the failures occurred on airplanes where the terminating action of AD 82-12-06 was incorporated.

What is the potential impact if FAA took no action? This condition, if not detected and corrected, could result in failure of the rudder control lever torque shaft. Such failure could lead to reduced controllability of the airplane.

Has FAA taken any action to this point? We issued a proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an AD that would apply to certain ASTA Models N22B and N24A. This proposal was published in the **Federal Register** as a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on April 29, 2003 (68 FR 22636). The NPRM proposed to require you to repetitively inspect, using either dye penetrant or magnetic particle methods and measurements, rudder control lever shafts for cracks; inspect (one-time) all lever shaft side plates by measuring the thickness; and if cracks or discrepancies in thickness are found, replace unserviceable parts with new or serviceable parts.

Was the public invited to comment? The FAA encouraged interested persons to participate in the making of this amendment. We did not receive any comments on the proposed rule or on our determination of the cost to the public.

FAA's Determination

What is FAA's final determination on this issue? After careful review of all available information related to the subject presented above, we have determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed except for minor editorial corrections. We have determined that these minor corrections:

- Provide the intent that was proposed in the NPRM for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM.

How does the revision to 14 CFR part 39 affect this AD? On July 10, 2002, FAA published a new version of 14 CFR part 39 (67 FR 47997, July 22, 2002), which governs FAA's AD system. This regulation now includes material that relates to special flight permits, alternative methods of compliance, and altered products. This material previously was included in each individual AD. Since this material is included in 14 CFR part 39, we will not include it in future AD actions.