

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the superseding of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model MD-11 series airplanes, that currently requires an inspection to detect chafing or damage of the electrical wires leading to the terminal strips in the center accessory compartment (CAC) area, and corrective actions if necessary. That AD also currently requires revising the wire connection stack up of certain cable terminals at the electrical power center bays in the CAC, and replacing certain terminal strips with new strips and removing applicable nameplates at electrical power center bays. This action would require additional actions for improving the terminal strips and would revise the applicability of the existing AD to include additional airplanes. This proposal is prompted by issuance of revised service information. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent arcing and sparking damage to the power feeder cables, terminal strips, and adjacent structure, and consequent smoke and fire in the CAC.

DATES: Comments must be received by September 8, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001-NM-163-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-163-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 Aircraft Group, Long Beach Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Data and Service Management, Dept. C1-L5A (D800-0024). This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brett Portwood, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130L, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5350; fax (562) 627-5210.

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-163-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-163-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

On November 22, 2000, the FAA issued airworthiness directive (AD) 2000-24-12, amendment 39-12019 (65 FR 75615, December 4, 2000), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model MD-11 series airplanes, to require an inspection to detect chafing or damage of the electrical wires leading to the terminal strips in the center accessory compartment (CAC) area, and corrective actions if necessary. That AD also requires revising the wire connection stack up of certain cable terminals at the electrical power center bays in the CAC, and replacing certain terminal strips with new strips and removing applicable nameplates at electrical power center bays. That action was prompted by an incident of arcing between a power feeder cable and terminal strip support bracket. The requirements of that AD are intended to prevent arcing and sparking damage to the power feeder cables, terminal strips, and adjacent structure, and consequent smoke and fire in the CAC.

Other Related Rulemaking

We, in conjunction with Boeing and operators of Model MD-11 and -11F airplanes, have reviewed all aspects of the service history of those airplanes to identify potential unsafe conditions and to take appropriate corrective actions. This proposed AD is one of a series of corrective actions identified during that process. We have previously issued several other ADs and may consider further rulemaking actions to address the remaining identified unsafe conditions.

Actions Since Issuance of Previous Rule

Since the issuance of AD 2000-24-12, we have reviewed and approved Revision 02 of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD11-24A097, including Evaluation Form, dated December 4, 2002 (the original issue of the service bulletin was referenced in AD 2000-24-12 as the appropriate source of service information for accomplishing the required actions). Revision 02 provides additional terminal strip information; adds airplanes to the effectivity; and corrects part numbers for the terminal stud stack up washers, which were inadvertently called out incorrectly in the original issue of this service bulletin. More work is necessary on all airplanes changed per the original issue and Revision 01 of the service bulletin.

For certain airplanes, Revision 02 of the service bulletin describes procedures for:

- Revising the wire connection stack up of the cable terminals at the