

fasteners associated with flap carriages and is not related to the bushing problem addressed by this AD.

Also, the commenter did not provide adequate data to support the claim that no incorrect markers would still be installed on an airplane after 8 years in service. Contrary to the commenter's assertion, Boeing reports that its supply of incorrect markers has not been purged. When Boeing first revised the marker to show the correct orientation, the part number of the new marker was the same as the marker showing the incorrect orientation (part number BAC27EWG-24). Boeing created a new marker with a new part number (BAC27EWG-39). According to Boeing Service Letter 747-SL-57-77, " * * * due to the large numbers of correct BAC27EWG-24 markers already in stock, the BAC27EWG-39 was made an option to the correct BAC27EWG-24 marker. This may have allowed some of the incorrect BAC27EWG-24 markers to be installed." Therefore, because some markers showing incorrect orientation may still be installed on affected airplanes, the FAA finds it necessary to issue this AD.

Request To Reconcile Applicability

One commenter identifies a difference between the applicability of the proposed AD and the effectivity of Service Bulletin 747-57-2166. The proposed AD includes Model 747-400s, which are not listed in the service bulletin. The commenter requests that this disagreement be corrected before the AD is issued.

The FAA acknowledges the disagreement; however, as explained in the proposed AD, Boeing had reported (via Service Letter 747-SL-57-77, dated November 18, 1993) that the subject incorrect markers may also be installed on Model 747-400 airplanes. Model 747-400 airplanes (except the Model 747SP, which has flaps of a different design) are correctly included in the applicability of this AD. No change to the final rule is necessary regarding this issue.

Request To Revise Identity of Airplanes Affected by Certain Requirements

One operator requests that paragraphs (a) and (b) of the proposed AD be revised to clarify the group of airplanes subject to those proposed requirements. Paragraphs (a) and (b), as proposed, identify airplanes with respect to bushing replacement done in accordance with a certain service bulletin. However, for certain airplanes (*i.e.*, those with line numbers after 316), the bushings were installed correctly by means of a production change. The

operator concludes that paragraphs (a) and (b), as written in the proposed AD, would have excluded airplanes on which the production change had been completed.

The FAA concurs with the request, for the reasons provided by the commenter. The intent of paragraphs (a) and (b)—as well as (c) and (d)—of this AD is to consider the status of the bushing installation—regardless of the method followed (*i.e.*, the service bulletin or the production change). Paragraphs (a) through (d) have been revised in the final rule to reflect this intent.

Request To Revise Compliance Time

One operator requests that the proposed grace period and repetitive inspection interval be revised to correspond to the operator's C-check schedule. The proposed 1,200-flight-cycle interval would not conform to the operator's C-check schedule, so the operator would need to schedule intermediate maintenance to comply with the proposed AD. This commenter suggests that the proposed grace period and repetitive inspection interval be changed to "1,200 flight cycles or 18 months, whichever occurs later," which would allow the inspections to be accomplished during the operator's regularly scheduled maintenance.

The FAA does not concur. Failure of the clevis lug is flight-cycle-dependent, not time-dependent. Allowing an 18-month interval between inspections for high utilization airplanes would not provide an acceptable level of safety. No change to the final rule is necessary in this regard.

Request To Require Operator To Revise Maintenance Manual

One operator suggests that the Boeing 747 Airplane Maintenance Manual may contribute to the identified unsafe condition because the Boeing overhaul manual (referenced in the maintenance manual) does not specify that the bushings be installed in the orientation specified in the proposed AD. The operator adds that a manual revision would be more effective than an AD in addressing the unsafe condition.

The FAA disagrees. The operator may have been considering a now-obsolete airplane maintenance manual; the most recent version of the maintenance manual specifies the correct installation of the bushing. No change to the final rule is necessary in this regard.

Request To Clarify Terminating Action Requirement

One commenter requests clarification of paragraph (c) of the proposed AD. The commenter questions whether the

intent of the requirement is to replace all bushings—whether or not the bushing installation is properly oriented—in accordance with Revision 5 of the service bulletin.

The FAA agrees that clarification of the requirement might be necessary. However, as stated previously, paragraph (c) has been revised in the final rule. The changes made to paragraph (c) of this AD address this commenter's concerns.

Explanation of Additional Changes to Proposed AD

Several changes have been made to the proposed AD. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of the proposed AD specify accomplishment of a "general visual inspection." The FAA has recharacterized this as a "detailed inspection" in the final rule to clarify the type of inspection required; the inspection procedures remain the same. Note 1 in this final rule defines a detailed inspection.

Paragraph (d) of the proposed AD has been retitled "Part Installation" to more accurately identify the requirement. In addition, the text of paragraph (d) has been revised for clarification.

Although the applicability identified in the proposed AD remains the same, the number of airplanes affected by this final rule has been corrected (as specified in the Cost Impact section).

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 changes previously described. The FAA has determined that these changes will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

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 FAA's airworthiness directives system. The regulation now includes material that relates to altered products, special flight permits, and alternative methods of compliance (AMOCs). The office authorized to approve AMOCs is identified in paragraph (e) of this proposed AD.

Change to Labor Rate Estimate

We have reviewed the figures we have used over the past several years to calculate AD costs to operators. To account for various inflationary costs in the airline industry, we find it necessary