

**Special Flight Permits**

(e) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

**Incorporation by Reference**

(f) Unless otherwise specified in this AD, the actions shall be done in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2478, dated February 7, 2002. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**Effective Date**

(g) This amendment becomes effective on February 10, 2003.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on December 24, 2002.

**Charles D. Huber,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*  
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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION****Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 2000-NM-402-AD; Amendment 39-12997; AD 2002-26-09]

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 757-200 Series Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Boeing Model 757-200 series airplanes with stowage bins installed forward of door 2 at Station 680. This AD requires a one-time inspection to determine if a certain intercostal is installed for support of the overhead stowage bin(s) at Station 680, and follow-on actions, if necessary. This action is necessary to prevent failure of the stowage bin attachment fitting at Station 680, which could result in the overhead stowage bin falling onto the passenger seats below and injuring passengers or impeding the evacuation of passengers in an emergency. This

action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

**DATES:** Effective February 10, 2003.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of February 10, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

David Crotty, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-1675; fax (425) 227-1181.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Boeing Model 757-200 series airplanes with stowage bins installed forward of door 2 at Station 680 was published in the **Federal Register** on May 15, 2002 (67 FR 34639). That action proposed to require a one-time inspection to determine if a certain intercostal is installed for support of the overhead stowage bin(s) at Station 680, and follow-on actions, if necessary.

**Comments**

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the comments received. One commenter states that it offers no comments because it does not operate any affected airplanes.

**Extend Compliance Time for Installation of Intercostal(s)**

Several commenters request that the FAA extend the compliance time for installation of the intercostal(s), if necessary, from 24 months to 60 months after the effective date of the AD. The commenters point out that the time required to gain access for installing the intercostal(s) is significant (the commenters estimate 65 work hours is needed to gain access, install, and close up), and the proposed 24-month compliance time would not allow most operators to accomplish the proposed

actions during a heavy maintenance visit. The commenters also state that, based on preliminary inspections, a significant portion of the airplane fleet may be without the subject intercostal. To ensure that an acceptable level of safety is maintained if the compliance time is extended to 60 months, the commenters recommend accomplishment of repetitive inspections for cracking every 18 months.

The FAA concurs that extending the compliance time for the installation of the intercostal(s) is an acceptable alternative to requiring installation of the intercostal(s) within 24 months after the effective date of this AD, provided that repetitive inspections for cracking are performed until the intercostal is installed. Therefore, we have revised paragraph (b) in this final rule to add subparagraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2), which specify the compliance alternatives.

**Reduce Compliance Time for One-Time Inspection**

The same commenters who request extension of the compliance time for installing the intercostal also request that we reduce the compliance time from 24 months to 12 months for the one-time inspection to determine if the subject intercostal is installed. One of the commenters explains that reducing the compliance time in this way would ensure that any structural damage is found and fixed in a timely manner.

We do not concur with the request to reduce the compliance time for the one-time inspection. In developing an appropriate compliance time for this AD, we considered not only the manufacturer's recommendation, but the degree of urgency associated with addressing the subject unsafe condition, and the time necessary to perform the inspection. In light of all of these factors, we find a 24-month compliance time for completing the required inspection to be warranted, in that it represents an appropriate interval of time allowable for affected airplanes to continue to operate without compromising safety. No change is necessary in this regard.

**Request To Allow Stop-Drilling of Cracks**

Two commenters request that we revise paragraph (c) of the proposed AD to allow stop-drilling of any crack that is found, instead of requiring repair before further flight. The commenters state that, following stop-drilling of the crack, the affected overhead stowage bin could be blocked out until an interim repair is installed within 90 days. The commenters state no justification for