

**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-343-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-343-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

**Discussion**

The FAA has received reports indicating that cracking has been found in the forward tang of the upper inboard spar cap of the wing on certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-8-70 series airplanes. The cracking has been found on airplanes that have accumulated approximately 18,000 total flight hours. The cracking occurred

between the fuselage and wing station Xfs=67.500 on the left and right sides of the airplane, and has been attributed to stress corrosion. This condition, if not corrected, could result in structural damage to adjacent components of the wing and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

**Explanation of Relevant Service Information**

The FAA has reviewed and approved McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC8-57-072 R03, Revision 03, dated October 2, 1995. That service bulletin describes procedures for performing test or inspections between stations Xcw=69.500 and Xfs=67.500, and repairs or modifications if necessary, on three airplane groups, as follows:

- For airplanes in Group 1, the service bulletin describes procedures for a one-time eddy current conductivity test of the upper inboard spar cap of the wing to determine the type of material. For an upper inboard spar cap of certain material, the service bulletin specifies accomplishing a modification of the slant panel cap of the wing leading edge assembly per a figure in a certain chapter of the structural repair manual (SRM). For airplanes in Group 1, the service bulletin does not describe procedures for modification of the wing spar cap. (The procedures in the SRM involve performing a general visual inspection for corrosion, removing any evidence of corrosion, installing fillers, and installing an external rework doubler, as applicable.) For an upper inboard spar cap of certain other material, the service bulletin describes procedures for a visual inspection for corrosion or a previous repair of the slant panel cap of the wing leading edge assembly. The service bulletin describes procedures for a modification as a follow-on action for this inspection. That modification involves removing any corrosion, repairing the slant panel cap of the leading edge assembly or replacing it with a new slant panel cap, modifying the front spar stiffeners and upper spar cap, and installing doublers on the wing upper surface.

- For airplanes in Group 2, the service bulletin describes procedures identical to those for Group 1 airplanes, except that no conductivity test is necessary, and a previously installed repair must be removed before modifying the front spar stiffeners and upper spar cap.

- For airplanes in Group 3, the service bulletin describes procedures for a visual inspection for corrosion of the slant panel cap of the wing leading edge assembly, and a modification that involves modifying the front spar

stiffeners, and replacing the slant panel cap with a new improved cap if necessary.

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

**Explanation of Related AD**

We have previously issued AD 90-16-05, amendment 39-6614 (55 FR 31818, August 6, 1990), which applies to McDonnell Douglas Model DC-8 series airplanes, as listed in McDonnell Douglas Report No. MDC K1579, Revision A, dated March 1, 1990. McDonnell Douglas Report No. MDC K1579, Revision A, specifies accomplishment of certain inspections and structural modifications in accordance with various service bulletins, including McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC8-57-72, Revision 2, dated July 16, 1971; and McDonnell Douglas DC-8 Service Bulletin 57-34, Revision 3, dated December 29, 1970. Accomplishment of the actions in this proposed AD would constitute compliance with the inspections required by paragraph A. of AD 90-16-05, as it pertains to those service bulletins.

**Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule**

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other products of this same type design, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

**Clarification of Inspection Type**

The service bulletin identifies the inspection for corrosion or previous repair, as applicable, as a "visual inspection." However, we find that the procedures described in the service bulletin constitute a detailed inspection. A definition of this type of inspection is included in Note 1 of this AD.

**Differences Between Proposed AD and Service Information**

As stated previously, McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC8-57-072 R03, Revision 03, refers to a certain figure in a certain chapter of the SRM as a source for additional information for a follow-on modification of the slant panel cap. Where that referenced figure specifies to contact the manufacturer for appropriate action, this proposed AD would require the repair of those conditions to be accomplished per a method approved by the FAA, or per data meeting the type certification basis