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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002-NE-22-AD; Amendment 39-13369; AD 2003-23-05-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Titeflex Corporation

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Titeflex Corporation hoses installed on Boeing 737-300, -400, -500, -600, -700, -700C, -800, -900, 747-400, 757-200, -300, 767-200, -300, and -300F airplanes. This AD requires, within 24 months after the effective date of the AD, inspection of certain Titeflex Corporation hoses for proper date and paint code, replacement if necessary, and inspection for proper heat treatment of aluminum B-nuts, if necessary. This AD is prompted by certain Titeflex Corporation hoses discovered with incorrect heat treatment of B-nuts. We are issuing this AD to prevent fire extinguishing system and fuel system hose failure due to improperly heat treated aluminum B-nuts.

DATES: This AD becomes effective December 24, 2003. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations as of December 24, 2003.

ADDRESSES: You can get the service information identified in this AD from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, PO Box 3703, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207; telephone (206) 544-5000.

You may examine the AD docket, by appointment, at the FAA, New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel,

12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA. You may examine the service information, by appointment, at the FAA, New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Terry Fahr, Aerospace Engineer, Boston Aircraft Certification Office, FAA, Engine and Propeller Directorate, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803-5299; telephone (781) 238-7155; fax (781) 238-7199.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA proposed to amend 14 CFR Part 39 with a proposed airworthiness directive (AD). The proposed AD applies to certain Titeflex Corporation hoses installed on Boeing 737-300, -400, -500, -600, -700, -700C, -800, -900, 747-400, 757-200, -300, 767-200, -300, and -300F airplanes. We published the proposed AD in the **Federal Register** on March 13, 2003 (68 FR 11999). That action proposed to require within 24 months after the effective date of the AD, inspection of hoses for proper date and paint code, replacement if necessary, and inspection for proper heat treatment of aluminum B-nuts, if necessary.

Comments

We provided the public the opportunity to participate in the development of this AD. We have considered the comments received.

List Only Specific Aircraft

One commenter requests that only specific aircraft be listed in the applicability, and requests that we eliminate the statement "used on, but not limited to" from the applicability statement.

The FAA does not agree. Since the hoses can be used on many airplanes, the FAA uses the statement "used on, but not limited to" to include any operator who may have installed a hose on an airplane other than the ones called out in the service bulletins.

Entire Fleet's Effectivity

One commenter requests that the AD include the entire fleet's effectivity, because hoses may have been exchanged between aircraft.

The FAA agrees that hoses may have been exchanged between aircraft.

However, as detailed above, no change to the AD is needed because the statement "installed on, but not limited to" already includes the entire fleet.

Ensure Adequacy of Service Bulletins

One commenter notes that the service bulletins should contain adequate information to do the inspection requirements, and that an adequate number of spare hoses should be made available.

The FAA agrees. The alert service bulletins contain adequate information to do the inspection requirements, and the FAA has been advised by Titeflex Corporation that an adequate supply of spare hoses is available.

Correct a Reference to Service Bulletins

One commenter requests that the reference to service bulletins listed in Table 1, be removed from the compliance paragraph preceding Table 1 because those service bulletins are not referenced in Table 1.

The FAA does not agree. The compliance paragraph mandates the inspection of the manufacture date code on all hoses listed in Table 1 of this AD, using the Accomplishment Instructions of the applicable Boeing alert service bulletins (ASBs) contained in Table 1 of this AD. Table 1 lists six different Alert Service Bulletins. Therefore, no change will be made to the AD.

Allow Use of Aircraft Records For AD Compliance

One commenter requests that the use of aircraft records be permitted as an alternate means of compliance (AMOC) with the inspections requirements of this AD.

The FAA agrees. The operator can request an AMOC and the FAA will review the operator's records to determine AMOC acceptability.

New Revision to Service Bulletin

The proposed AD incorporated by reference Boeing ASB 737-26A1109, Revision 1, dated November 7, 2002. The final rule has replaced that ASB with Boeing ASB 737-26A1109, Revision 2, dated May 8, 2003.

Conclusion

We have carefully reviewed the available data, including the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD with the changes described