

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Part 39**

[Docket No. 2002-NM-215-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), DC-9-87 (MD-87), and Model MD-88 Airplanes**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), DC-9-87 (MD-87), and Model MD-88 airplanes. This proposal would require replacement of certain freeze protection ribbon heaters in the lavatory water supply system, and flushing, cleaning, and sterilizing the potable water system; disconnecting, coiling, and stowing the wiring of the freeze protection ribbon heater; or removal of freeze protection heaters. This action is necessary to prevent failure of freeze protection ribbon heaters, which could result in the charring, scorching, smoking, and shorting out of freeze protection ribbon heaters in the lavatory water supply system. This condition, if not corrected, could also result in electrical arcing of freeze protection ribbon heaters, leading to fire and damage to water lines and components under the lavatory sink. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by January 20, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-215-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. 2002-NM-215-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 or 2000 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; or at the FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cheyenne Del Carmen, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5338; 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 2002-NM-215-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. 2002-NM-215-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports of charring, scorching, smoking, and shorting out of freeze protection ribbon heaters in the lavatory water supply system of certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), DC-9-87 (MD-87), and MD-88 airplanes. We also received reports of burning and scorching to water lines and components under the lavatory sink. Investigation revealed that the freeze protection ribbon heaters were failing. This condition, if not corrected, could result in electrical arcing of freeze protection ribbon heaters, leading to fire and damage to water lines and components under the lavatory sink.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-25A381, dated August 5, 2002. This service bulletin describes procedures for replacing the existing freeze protection ribbon heater in the lavatory water supply system with a new, reidentified heater hose assembly, and flushing, cleaning, and sterilizing the potable water system; disconnecting, coiling, and stowing the wiring of the freeze protection ribbon heater in the lavatory water supply system; or removing the freeze protection ribbon heater from the lavatory water supply system. Accomplishment of the actions specified in the Boeing service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-25A381 refers to Jamco Corporation Service Bulletin MD080-25-829, dated February 14, 2002, as an additional source of service information for instructions on replacing the existing freeze protection ribbon heater with a new, reidentified heater hose assembly for Model DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), DC-9-87 (MD-87), and MD-88 airplanes.