

certain Fokker Model F.28 Mark 1000, 2000, 3000, and 4000 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive general visual inspections, lubrication, and tests of the release mechanism for the service/emergency door; and corrective actions if necessary. This proposal also provides an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections and lubrication. This action is necessary to prevent failure of the release mechanism on the service/emergency door, which could result in the inability to open the service/emergency door during an emergency evacuation. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by January 5, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001-NM-333-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. 2001-NM-333-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 Fokker Services B.V., P.O. Box 231, 2150 AE Nieuw-Vennep, the Netherlands. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Rodriguez, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-1137; fax (425) 227-1149.

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-333-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-333-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The Civil Aviation Authority—The Netherlands (CAA-NL), which is the airworthiness authority for the Netherlands, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Fokker Model F.28 Mark 1000, 2000, 3000, and 4000 series airplanes. The CAA-NL advises that it has received reports that, during evacuation training, the service/emergency door release mechanism was unable to release the door rollers, which resulted in the inability to open the service/emergency door. Investigation revealed that the release mechanism did not operate properly due to lack of lubrication on the door rollers. Service experience has shown that the reliability of the release mechanism can degrade if it is not regularly maintained (inspected, lubricated, and tested). Improperly

maintained service/emergency door release mechanisms, if not corrected, could result in the inability to open the service/emergency door during an emergency evacuation.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

Fokker Services B.V. has issued Fokker Service Bulletin F28/52-118, dated June 25, 2001, which describes procedures for repetitive inspections, lubrication, and tests of the release mechanism for the service/emergency door; and corrective actions if necessary. These procedures include inspection and lubrication of the four roller assemblies, actuating mechanism (including measurement of the torque of the torsion spring), and Bowden cables; adjustment of the Bowden cables; and measurement of the operating force for the emergency release button. The corrective actions include rework/repair or replacement of damaged or corroded parts with new parts of the same type.

Fokker Service B.V. has also issued Fokker Service Bulletin F28/52-89, dated October 31, 1983, which describes procedures for replacing the service/emergency door by removing the Bowden cable-operated door and installing a push-pull rod-operated door. Accomplishment of this service bulletin eliminates the need for the repetitive inspections and lubrication. For certain airplanes, Fokker Service Bulletin F28/52-89 recommends prior or concurrent accomplishment of Part VII of Fokker Service Bulletin F28/52-55, Revision 1, dated February 28, 1977. Part VII describes procedures for modification of the roller assemblies in the service/emergency door by installing a second pull-up mechanism.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in Service Bulletin F28/52-118, dated June 25, 2001, is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The CAA-NL classified Fokker Service Bulletin F28/52-118 as mandatory and issued Dutch airworthiness directive 2001-094, dated July 31, 2001, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in the Netherlands.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in the Netherlands and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of § 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the CAA-NL has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the