

(i) For Model 737-300, -400, and -500 series airplanes: Thereafter, repeat the inspections required by paragraph (h) of this AD at the times specified in paragraph (i)(1) or (i)(2) of this AD, as applicable.

(1) If BMS 3-27 grease (Mastinox 6856K) is used, thereafter, repeat the inspections at intervals not to exceed 16,000 flight hours or 96 months, whichever occurs first.

(2) If BMS 3-33 grease is used as a substitute for BMS 3-27 (Mastinox 6856K), thereafter, repeat the inspections at intervals not to exceed 8,000 flight hours or 48 months, whichever occurs first.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(j) In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, the Manager, Seattle ACO, FAA, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance for this AD.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on December 1, 2003.

**Ali Bahrami,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No.2003-NM-58-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-14, DC-9-15, DC-9-15F, DC-9-31, DC-9-32, DC-9-32 (VC-9C), DC-9-33F, DC-9-34, DC-9-34F, DC-9-33F, and DC-9-32F (C-9A, C-9B) Airplanes; and DC-9-20, DC-9-40, and DC-9-50 Series Airplanes**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes the superseding of an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9 series airplanes, that currently requires replacing the transformer ballast assembly in the pilot's console with a new, improved ballast assembly. This action would expand the applicability of the existing AD to include additional airplanes. In addition, this action would provide an optional method for accomplishing the requirements of the existing AD. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent overheating of the ballast transformers due to aging fluorescent tubes that cause a higher power demand on the ballast transformers, which could

result in smoke in the cockpit. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by January 22, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003-NM-58-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](mailto:9-anm-nprmcomment@faa.gov). Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2003-NM-58-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.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Elvin K. Wheeler, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5344; 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 2003-NM-58-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. 2003-NM-58-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

#### Discussion

On December 26, 2001, the FAA issued AD 2001-26-24, amendment 39-12590 (67 FR 497, January 4, 2002), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9 series airplanes, to require replacement of the transformer ballast assembly in the pilot's console with a new, improved ballast assembly. That action was prompted by instances of smoke emanating from the ballast transformers of the cockpit fluorescent lights. The requirements of that AD are intended to prevent overheating of the ballast transformers due to aging fluorescent tubes that cause a higher power demand on the ballast transformers, which could result in smoke in the cockpit.

#### Actions Since Issuance of Previous Rule

Since the issuance of that AD, the FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC9-33A114, Revision 03, dated January 16, 2003. The replacement procedure described in Revision 03 is essentially identical to that in Revision 01 of the service bulletin, which was referenced in AD 2001-26-24 as the appropriate source of service information for accomplishing