

of other aural warnings of malfunctions in other systems and, thus, could jeopardize a safe flight and landing. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by February 17, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-101-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-101-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 Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Binh V. Tran, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 917-6485; fax (425) 917-6590.

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-101-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-101-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports from at least seven operators of Boeing Model 737 airplanes of a malfunction of the aural warning horn for the landing gear. The aural warning operated during climb or cruise, after retraction of the landing gear and flaps. The malfunction can cause the flight crew's focus to change from operation of the airplane to identification of the cause of the malfunction. Malfunction of the aural warning for the landing gear, if not corrected, could lead the crew to open the circuit breaker for the aural warning horn which stops the operation of other aural warnings of malfunctions in other systems and, thus, could jeopardize a safe flight and landing.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-32A1343, dated July 26, 2001, which describes procedures for replacement of the proximity switch electronics unit (PSEU) with a new unit which will help prevent a malfunction of the aural warning horn for the landing gear. The Alert Service Bulletin indicates that Boeing Component Service Bulletins 285A1600-32-01 and 285A1600-32-02 are to be accomplished concurrently.

Accomplishment of the actions specified in the Alert Service Bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition.

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. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

Differences

Although the service bulletin recommends accomplishing the replacement "as soon as manpower and material are available," the FAA has determined that such an imprecise compliance time would not address the identified unsafe condition in a timely manner. In developing an appropriate compliance time for this AD, the FAA considered not only the manufacturer's recommendation, but the degree of urgency associated with addressing the subject unsafe condition, the average utilization of the affected fleet, and the time necessary to perform the modifications. In light of all of these factors, the FAA finds a compliance time of 18 months for completing the required actions to be warranted, in that it represents an appropriate interval of time for affected airplanes to continue to operate without compromising safety.

The FAA is not proposing in this NPRM that Boeing Component Service Bulletins 285A1600-32-01 and 285A1600-32-02 be accomplished concurrently with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-32A1343, dated July 26, 2001.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 890 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 283 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 4 work hours per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$65 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$40 per airplane. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$84,900, or \$300 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD