

could result in reduced structural integrity of the fuselage, accomplish the following:

(a) Before the accumulation of 30,000 total flight cycles or within 10 years after the effective date of this AD, whichever is first: Modify the longeron-to-frame installation of the upper center fuselage between stations Y=655.000 and Y=813.000, at longerons L-5L to L-5R (includes fabrication of the angles and installation of support angles and doublers), per Boeing Service Bulletin 717-53-0001, excluding Evaluation Form, dated March 20, 2001.

#### Alternative Methods of Compliance

(b) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

**Note 2:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles ACO.

#### Special Flight Permit

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on February 14, 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. 2002-NM-282-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-600, 737-700, 737-700C, 737-800, 737-900, 757, and 767 Series 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 all Boeing Model 737-600, 737-700, 737-700C, 737-800, 737-900, 757, and 767 series airplanes. This proposal would require revising the Airplane Flight Manual (AFM) to advise the flightcrew

to don oxygen masks as a first and immediate step when a cabin altitude warning occurs. This action is necessary to prevent incapacitation of the flightcrew due to lack of oxygen, which could result in loss of control of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by April 10, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-282-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. 2002-NM-282-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 for Windows 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:** Donald Eiford, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 917-6465; 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-282-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-282-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056.

#### Discussion

On October 25, 1999, a Learjet Model 35 airplane operating under part 135 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 135) departed Orlando International Airport en route to Dallas, Texas. Air traffic control lost communication with the airplane near Gainesville, Florida. Air Force and National Guard airplanes intercepted the airplane, but the flightcrews of the chase airplanes indicated that the windows of the Model 35 airplane were apparently frosted over, which prevented the flightcrews of the chase airplanes from observing the interior of the Model 35 airplane. The flightcrews of the chase airplanes reported that they did not observe any damage to the airplane. Subsequently, the Model 35 airplane ran out of fuel and crashed in South Dakota. To date, causal factors of the accident have not been determined. However, lack of the Learjet flightcrew's response to air traffic control poses the possibility of flightcrew incapacitation and raises concerns with the pressurization and oxygen systems.

Recognizing these concerns, the FAA initiated a special certification review (SCR) to determine if pressurization and