



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2014-0778; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-095-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain The Boeing Company Model 747-100B, 747-100B SUD, 747-200B, 747-200C, 747-200F, 747-300, 747-400, 747-400D, 747-400F, 747SR, and 747SP series airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports of corrosion found on the mating surfaces between certain skin and stringers at circumferential skin splices. This proposed AD would require general visual inspections of the fuselage skin at certain lower circumferential splices for the presence of existing external doublers, repetitive inspections of the fuselage skin, and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. We are proposing this AD to detect and correct compromised fillet seals, which can result in corrosion and skin cracking and consequent loss of capability to support limit loads.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by **[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P. O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2014-0778; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bill Ashforth, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6432; fax: 425-917-6590; email: bill.ashforth@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2014-0778; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-095-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

We received reports of corrosion found on the mating surfaces between the skin and stringers in Section 42 and Section 46 at circumferential skin splices. A review of the applicable drawings shows that the stringers in these circumferential splice locations were not installed with faying surface sealant. Fillet seals were applied on both the upper and lower sides of the stringer, so if a fillet seal is compromised, moisture can enter the area and result in corrosion in the area between the skin and the stringer. This condition, if not corrected, could result in skin cracking, which could result in a loss of capability to support limit loads.

Relevant Service Information

We reviewed Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014. For information on the procedures and compliance times, see this service information at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2014-0778.

FAA’s Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information identified previously, except as discussed under “Difference Between the Proposed AD and the Service Information.”

The phrase “related investigative actions” is used in this proposed AD. “Related investigative actions” are follow-on actions that (1) are related to the primary actions, and (2) further investigate the nature of any condition found. Related investigative actions in an AD could include, for example, inspections.

The phrase “corrective actions” is used in this proposed AD. “Corrective actions” are actions that correct or address any condition found. Corrective actions in an AD could include, for example, repairs.

Explanation of “RC” Steps in Service Information

The FAA worked in conjunction with industry, under the Airworthiness Directives Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee (AD ARC), to enhance the AD system. One enhancement was a new process for annotating which steps in the service information are required for compliance with an AD. Differentiating these steps from other tasks in the service information is expected to improve an owner’s/operator’s understanding of crucial AD requirements and help provide consistent judgment in AD compliance. The actions specified in the service information described previously include steps that are labeled as RC (required for compliance) because these steps have a direct effect on detecting, preventing, resolving, or eliminating an identified unsafe condition.

As noted in the specified service information, steps labeled as RC must be done to comply with the proposed AD. However, steps that are not labeled as RC are recommended. Those steps that are not labeled as RC may be deviated from, done as part of other actions, or done using accepted methods different from those identified in the service information without obtaining approval of an alternative method of compliance (AMOC), provided the steps labeled as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in a serviceable condition. Any substitutions or changes to steps labeled as RC will require approval of an AMOC.

Difference between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletin

Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014, specifies to contact the manufacturer for instructions on how to repair certain conditions, but this proposed AD would require repairing those conditions in one of the following ways:

- In accordance with a method that we approve; or
- Using data that meet the certification basis of the airplane, and that have been approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) whom we have authorized to make those findings.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 165 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

Estimated costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspection	Up to 121 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$10,370	\$0	Up to \$10,285	Up to \$1,697,025

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA’s authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency’s authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: “General requirements.” Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This proposed regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

The Boeing Company: Docket No. FAA-2014-0778; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-095-AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by **[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 747-100B, 747-100B SUD, 747-200B, 747-200C, 747-200F, 747-300, 747-400, 747-400D, 747-400F, 747SR, and 747SP series airplanes; certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of corrosion found on the mating surfaces between certain skin and stringers at circumferential skin splices. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct compromised fillet seals, which can result in corrosion and skin cracking and consequent loss of capability to support limit loads.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Inspections and Repair for Group 1 Airplanes

For airplanes identified as Group 1 in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014: At the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014, except as provided by paragraph (i)(1) of this AD, do external general visual inspections for the presence of external doublers on the fuselage skin, and do the applicable actions specified in paragraphs (g)(1) and (g)(2) of this AD, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014, except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD.

(1) Before further flight, do an external lower lobe doubler surface low frequency eddy current (LFEC) inspection for skin cracks or do an external lower lobe skin surface LFEC inspection for corrosion, as applicable, and do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions. Do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions before further flight.

(2) Do all applicable repetitive inspections of the fuselage skin thereafter at the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014.

(h) Inspections and Repair for Group 2 Airplanes

For airplanes identified as Group 2 in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014: At the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014, except as provided by paragraph (i)(1) of this AD, do external general visual inspections for the presence of external doublers on the fuselage skin, and do the applicable actions specified in paragraphs (h)(1) and (h)(2) of this AD, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014, except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD.

(1) For affected areas with any existing repair doubler: Before further flight, do inspections and applicable repairs using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified by paragraph (j) of this AD.

(2) For affected areas with no existing repair doubler, do the applicable actions specified in paragraph (h)(2)(i) and (h)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Before further flight, do an external lower lobe skin surface LFEC for corrosion, an external lower lobe doubler surface LFEC inspection for skin cracks, and an external lower lobe skin detailed inspection for cracks and do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions. Do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions before further flight.

(ii) Do all applicable repetitive inspections of the fuselage skin thereafter at the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014.

(i) Exceptions to Service Information Specifications

(1) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014, specifies a compliance time “after the original issue date of this service bulletin,” this

AD requires compliance within the specified compliance time after the effective date of this AD.

(2) Although Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2861, dated April 1, 2014, specifies to contact Boeing for repair data, and specifies that action as “RC” (Required for Compliance), this AD requires repair before further flight using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD.

(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the ACO, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k)(1) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(3) Except as required by paragraph (i) of this AD: If the service information contains steps that are labeled as RC (Required for Compliance), those steps must be done to comply with this AD; any steps that are not labeled as RC are recommended. Those steps that are not labeled as RC may be deviated from, done as part of other actions, or done using accepted methods different from those identified in the specified service information without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the steps labeled as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in a serviceable condition. Any substitutions or changes to steps labeled as RC require approval of an AMOC.

(4) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(k) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Bill Ashforth, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6432; fax: 425-917-6590; email: bill.ashforth@faa.gov.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P.O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on November 19, 2014.

Suzanne Masterson,
Acting Manager,
Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2014-28124 Filed 11/26/2014 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 11/28/2014]