type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 3 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the proposed inspection, and that the average labor rate is $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $180, or $60 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 action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (1) is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a ''significant rule'' under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES.**

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Saab Aircraft AB: Docket 98–NM–42–AD.

Applicability: Saab Model SAAB 2000 series airplanes, serial numbers 004 through 053 inclusive; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (b) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent chafing of the hydraulic pressure pipe of the engine driven pump (EDP), which could result in charring of the hydraulic tube and consequent engine compartment fire, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, accomplish the actions specified in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this AD, in accordance with Saab Service Bulletin 2000–30–014, Revision 01, dated January 9, 1998.

(1) Perform a one-time inspection to detect discrepancies (incorrect routing, insufficient clearance, and chafing) of the electrical harness of the propeller de-icing system, left and right sides. If any discrepancy is found, prior to further flight, repair.

(2) Perform a one-time visual inspection to detect chafing of the hydraulic pipe of the EDP, left and right sides. If any chafing is found, prior to further flight, replace the pipe with a new or serviceable part.

(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, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, International Branch, ANM–116.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the International Branch, ANM–116.

(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.

NOTE 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in Swedish airworthiness directive SAD No. 1–121, dated January 9, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 19, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–7881 Filed 3–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–311–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 757–200 Series Airplanes Powered by Rolls-Royce RB211–535E4/E4B Engines

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 certain Boeing Model 757–200 series airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections to detect cracking of the acoustic panels in the engine inlet, and repair, if necessary. This proposal also would require eventual replacement of the existing engine inlet with a new inlet, which, when accomplished, would terminate the repetitive inspections. This proposal is prompted by reports of cracking of acoustic panels in the engine inlet, and incidents of pieces of the panels breaking off and being ingested into the engine. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect and correct cracking of the acoustic panels in the engine inlet, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the engine inlet, and consequent engine shutdown or surge; or in the event of a fan blade failure, separation of the inlet from the engine.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 11, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–311–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

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: Kathrine H. Rask, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM–140S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–1547; fax (425) 227–1181.

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 notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

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 notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket Number 97–NM–311–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. 97–NM–311–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received reports of cracking of the acoustic panels in the engine inlets of certain Boeing Model 757–200 series airplanes. In several cases, the areas of cracking are large enough to affect the structural integrity of the engine inlets. These cracked areas could detach and be ingested into the engine, which could cause internal damage to the engine and consequent engine shutdown. The cracked areas also could sag and disturb the airflow into the engine, which could cause the engine to surge and lose power. The FAA has received reports of two incidents in which portions of the engine inlet acoustic panels have been ingested into the engine; in one of these incidents, the ingested piece caused high vibration in the engine and damage to the leading edge tip of the fan blade.

The cracking of the acoustic panels has been attributed to an inherent design problem of the engine inlet, in which the resonance of the honeycomb structure at the core of the acoustic panels coincides with the passing frequency of the fan blade, which causes the honeycomb structure to crack. Because of the nature of this condition, the FAA has concluded that such cracking may exist or develop on other airplanes of this type design.

Cracking of the acoustic panels in the engine inlet, if not detected and corrected, could result in reduced structural integrity of the engine inlet, and consequent engine shutdown or surge; or in the event of a fan blade failure, separation of the inlet from the engine.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–B480, Revision 1, dated August 15, 1997, which describes procedures for repetitive detailed inspections to detect cracking of the acoustic panels in the engine inlet, and repair, if necessary.

The FAA also has reviewed and approved Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–9909, Revision 1, dated May 26, 1995, and Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–9958, Revision 1, dated March 18, 1994, which describe procedures for replacing the existing engine inlet assembly with a new engine inlet assembly that incorporates improved acoustic panels. Such replacement eliminates the need for the repetitive inspections. Accomplishment of this replacement, as described in these service bulletins, 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 bulletins described previously, except as discussed below.

Differences Between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletin

Operators should note that, for airplane on which damage is found that exceeds the acceptance standards provided in paragraph 2.A. of Appendix 1 of Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–B480, Revision 1, dated August 15, 1997, the service bulletin specifies that the manufacturer should be contacted for disposition of such damage. However, this proposed AD would not require that the manufacturer be contacted, but rather that those damaged engine inlets be replaced prior to further flight.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 52 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 24 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

Assuming both engines have inlets on which the improved acoustic panels have not been installed, it would take approximately 3 work hours per airplane (1.5 work hours per engine) to accomplish the proposed inspection, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this proposed inspection on U.S. operators is estimated to be $4,320, or $180 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Assuming both engines have inlets on which the improved acoustic panels have not been installed, it would take approximately 4 work hours per airplane (2 work hours per engine) to accomplish the proposed replacement, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Required parts would be provided by the engine manufacturer at no cost to the operator. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this modification on U.S. operators is estimated to be $5,760, or $240 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would not have substantial direct effects 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. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that 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); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES.**

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (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. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Boeing: Docket 97–NM–311–AD.

Applicability: Model 757–200 series airplanes; equipped with Rolls-Royce RB211–535E4/E4B engines, fitted with nose cowls having serial numbers 9001 through 9124 inclusive; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To detect and correct cracking of the acoustic panels in the engine inlet, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the engine inlet, and consequent engine shutdown or surge; or in the event of a fan blade failure, separation of the inlet from the engine; accomplish the following:

(a) Within 60 days after the effective date of this AD, perform a detailed inspection to detect cracking of the acoustic panels in the engine inlet, in accordance with Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–B480, Revision 1, dated August 15, 1997.

(1) If no cracking is detected, repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 650 hours time-in-service.

(2) If any cracking is detected, accomplish the requirements of either paragraph (a)(2)(i) or (a)(2)(ii), as applicable.

(i) If cracking is within the acceptance standards provided in paragraph 2.A. of Appendix 1 of the service bulletin, repair within 350 hours time-in-service, in accordance with the service bulletin. Thereafter, repeat the inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD at intervals not to exceed 650 hours time-in-service.

(ii) If cracking is outside the acceptance standards provided in paragraph 2.A. of Appendix 1 of the service bulletin, prior to further flight, replace the engine inlet with a new engine inlet that incorporates improved acoustic panels, in accordance with Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–9909, Revision 1, dated May 26, 1995, and Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–9958, Revision 1, dated March 18, 1994. No further action is required by this AD for that engine inlet.

(b) Within 18 months after the effective date of this AD, replace both existing engine inlets with new inlets that incorporate improved acoustic panels, in accordance with Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–9909, Revision 1, dated May 26, 1995, and Rolls-Royce Service Bulletin RB.211–71–9958, Revision 1, dated March 18, 1994. Accomplishment of such replacement constitutes terminating action for the requirements of this AD.

(c) 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, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Seattle ACO.

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

(d) 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 March 19, 1998.

Darrell M. Pederson,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–7880 Filed 3–25–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–U

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–288–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10 Series Airplanes and KC–10A (Military) 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 certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10 series airplanes and KC–10A (military) airplanes. This proposal would require repetitive inspections to detect cracking of the lower cap of the wing rear spar, and repair, if necessary. This proposal is prompted by reports of fatigue cracks found in the lower cap of the wing rear spar. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to detect and correct fatigue cracking of the lower cap of the wing rear spar, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

DATES: Comments must be received by May 11, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 97–NM–288–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from The Boeing Company, Douglas Products Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Technical Publications Business Administration, Dept. C1–L51