§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

98–18–22 McDonnell Douglas: Amendment 39–10738. Docket 96–NM–272–AD.

Applicability: Model DC–9–10, –15, and –30 series airplanes, and C–9 (military) airplanes; as listed in McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC9–53–276, dated September 30, 1996; 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 (e) 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 fatigue cracking in the fuselage skin or doubler at the corners of the upper cargo doorjamb, which could result in rapid decompression of the fuselage and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Note 2: Where there are differences between the service bulletin and the AD, the AD prevails.

Note 3: The words ''repair'' and ''modify/modification'' in this AD and the referenced service bulletin are used interchangeably.

Note 4: This AD will affect principal structural element (PSE) 53.09.023 of the DC–9 Supplemental Inspection Document (SID).

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 41,000 total landings, or within 3,000 landings after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform a one-time visual inspection to determine if the corners of the upper cargo doorjamb have been modified prior to the effective date of this AD.

(b) If the visual inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD reveals that the corners of the upper cargo doorjamb *have not been modified,* prior to further flight, perform an x-ray inspection to detect cracks of the fuselage skin and doubler at all corners of the upper cargo doorjamb, in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC9–53–276, dated September 30, 1996.

(1) If no crack is detected during the x-ray inspection required by this paragraph, accomplish the requirements of either paragraph (b)(1)(i) or (b)(1)(ii) of this AD, in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC9–53–276, dated September 30, 1996.

(i) *Option 1.* Repeat the x-ray inspection required by paragraph (b) of this AD thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,000 landings; or

(ii) *Option 2.* Prior to further flight, modify the corner skin of the upper cargo doorjamb, in accordance with the service bulletin. Prior to the accumulation of 28,000 landings after accomplishment of the modification, perform an eddy current inspection to detect cracks on the skin adjacent to the modification, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(A) If no crack is detected on the skin adjacent to the modification during the eddy current inspection required by this paragraph, repeat the eddy current inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 20,000 landings.

(B) If any crack is detected on the skin adjacent to the modification during any eddy current inspection required by this paragraph, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate.

(2) If any crack is found during any x-ray inspection required by this paragraph and the crack is 2 inches or less in length: Prior to further flight, modify/repair it in accordance with the service bulletin. Prior to the accumulation of 28,000 landings after accomplishment of the modification, perform an eddy current inspection to detect cracks on the skin adjacent to the modification, in accordance with the service bulletin.

(i) If no crack is detected during the eddy current inspection required by this paragraph, repeat the eddy current inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 20,000 landings.

(ii) If any crack is detected during any eddy current inspection required by this paragraph, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

(3) If any crack is found during any x-ray inspection required by this paragraph and the crack is greater than 2 inches in length: Prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

(c) If the visual inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD reveals that the corners of the upper cargo doorjamb *have been modified* previously: Prior to the accumulation of 28,000 landings after accomplishment of that modification, or within 3,000 landings after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later, perform an eddy current inspection to detect cracks on the skin adjacent to the modification, in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC9–53–276, dated September 30, 1996.

(1) If no crack is detected during the eddy current inspection required by this paragraph, repeat the eddy current inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 20,000 landings.

(2) If any crack is detected during any eddy current inspection required by this paragraph, prior to further flight, repair it in accordance with a method approved by the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

(d) Accomplishment of the actions required by this AD constitutes terminating action only for certain requirements of AD 96–13–03, amendment 39–9671 (61 FR 31009, dated June 19, 1996), with respect to PSE 53.09.023, of DC–9 Supplemental Inspection Document (SID) L26–008.

(e) 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 ACO. 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 5: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

(f) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with §§ 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.

(g) Except as provided in paragraphs (a), (b)(1)(ii)(B), (b)(2)(ii), (b)(3), and (c)(2) of this AD, the actions shall be done in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC9–53–276, dated September 30, 1996. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from The Boeing Company, Douglas Products Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Technical Publications Business Administration, Department C1–L51 (2–60). Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(h) This amendment becomes effective on October 20, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 28, 1998.

Vi L. Lipski,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–24246 Filed 9–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–47–AD; Amdt. 39–10739; AD 98–18–23]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment supersedes an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Boeing Model 747

series airplanes, that currently requires repetitive high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections to detect cracking on all surfaces of the upper recesses in certain latch support fittings of the cargo doorway, and replacement of cracked fittings with new fittings. The existing AD also provides for optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections. This amendment requires accomplishment of the previously optional terminating action. This amendment is prompted by reports indicating that the repetitive inspections required by the existing AD may not detect cracked fittings in a timely manner. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent the cargo door from opening while the airplane is in flight, which could result in rapid decompression of the airplane.

DATES: Effective October 20, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, dated December 10, 1992, and Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 2, dated October 6, 1994, as listed in the regulations, is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of October 20, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 1, dated January 28, 1993, as listed in the regulations, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of March 11, 1993 (58 FR 11190, February 24, 1993).

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, PO Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124–2207. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bob Breneman, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120S, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–2776; fax (425) 227–1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) by superseding AD 93–02–16, amendment 39–8500 (58 FR 11190, February 24, 1993), which is applicable to certain Boeing Model 747 series airplanes, was published in the **Federal Register** on December 11, 1997 (62 FR 65233). The action proposed to continue to require repetitive high frequency eddy current inspections to detect cracking on all surfaces of the upper recesses in certain latch support fittings of the cargo doorway, and replacement of cracked fittings with new fittings. The action also proposed to require accomplishment of the previously optional terminating action.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the comments received.

Support for the Rule

Several commenters support the proposed rule.

Request To Revise Cost Estimate

One commenter requests that the cost estimate for the proposed rule be increased to $4,500 per installation to reflect replacement of two truss fittings associated with each latch support fitting. The commenter notes that certain truss fittings [(the subject of AD 79–17–02 R2, amendment 39–3867 (45 FR 52357, August 7, 1980)] and certain latch support fittings (the subject of this AD) are made of the same 7079–T6 material. The commenter reports that it intends to replace the truss fittings at the same time it replaces the latch support fittings.

The FAA does not concur that the estimated cost of replacement of the latch support fittings should be increased to $4,500 per installation. This AD does not require replacement of any truss fittings that are attached to the latch support fittings. Although AD 79–17–02 R2 requires that the truss fittings be inspected, it does not require replacement because of the fail-safe design that incorporates two truss fittings for each latch support fitting. While the FAA acknowledges that it would be prudent for operators to replace those truss fittings at the same time the latch support fittings are replaced, this AD does not require replacement of any truss fittings. No change to the cost estimate of the final rule is necessary.

Request To Reduce Compliance Times

One commenter (the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom) requests that the compliance time for the proposed actions be reduced. Specifically, the CAA suggests that the inspections be performed at 3-month intervals and the latch support fittings replaced within 12 months. In support of its recommendation, the commenter refers to a report of an 8-inch crack found in a latch support fitting on a Boeing Model 747 series airplane. The fitting had been inspected twice in a 6-month period; no crack had been found during the first inspection. The commenter suggests that, based on the reported incident, such reduced compliance times would be more realistic.

The FAA does not concur with the request to reduce the compliance times. The FAA finds that the proposed 18-month replacement threshold will provide an acceptable level of safety because of the fail-safe capability resulting from multiple latch support fittings. In addition, the 18-month compliance time will allow for the fittings to be replaced during scheduled maintenance at regular maintenance bases, thereby minimizing the impact on affected operators. The FAA recognizes the CAA's jurisdiction and authority to require accomplishment within its suggested inspection interval and replacement threshold on affected airplanes within the United Kingdom.

Comment Concerning Availability of Materials

One commenter states that the 18-month replacement threshold required by this AD should not present a scheduling problem provided that materials are available from the manufacturer.

At this time, the FAA is not aware of any scheduling difficulties that may delay operators' acquisition of the required materials for timely compliance with this AD.

Change to the Rule

Operators should note that new paragraph (b) of the final rule has been revised to include an additional source of service information for accomplishment of the replacement. This change allows operators to replace the support fittings in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 1, dated January 28, 1993, in addition to the other cited versions of alert service bulletin.

Conclusion

After careful review of the available data, including the comments noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule with the change previously described. The FAA has determined that this change will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 200 Boeing Model 747 series airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet.

The FAA estimates that 115 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD.

The inspections that currently are required by AD 93–02–16, and retained in this AD, take approximately 31 work hours per airplane, per inspection cycle, to accomplish, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the currently required inspections on U.S. operators is estimated to be $213,900, or $1,860 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

The new action (replacement of the latch support fittings) that is required by this AD will take approximately 1,019 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Required parts will cost approximately $20,917 per airplane ($12,888 for all aft door fittings; $8,029 for all forward door fittings). Based on these figures, the cost impact of the new replacement requirements of this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $9,436,555, or $82,057 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the 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 adopted herein will 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 final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this action (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) 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 final evaluation has been prepared for this action and it is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption **ADDRESSES**.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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 removing amendment 39–8500 (58 FR 11190, February 24, 1993), and by adding a new airworthiness directive (AD), amendment 39–10739, to read as follows:

98–18–23 Boeing: Amendment 39–10739. Docket 97–NM–47–AD. Supersedes AD 93–02–16, Amendment 39–8500.

Applicability: Model 747 series airplanes, line numbers 1 through 200 inclusive; having 7079–T6 aluminum latch support fittings; 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 (d) 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 the cargo door from opening while the airplane is in flight, which could result in rapid decompression of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Restatement of the Requirements of this AD 93–02–16

(a) Within 60 days after March 11, 1993 (the effective date of AD 93–02–16, amendment 39–8500), perform a high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection to detect cracking on all surfaces of the upper recess in each 7079–T6 aluminum latch support fitting of the cargo doorway, in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 1, dated January 28, 1993, or Revision 2, dated October 6, 1994. After the effective date of this AD, only Revision 2 of the service bulletin shall be used.

Note 2: Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 2, dated October 6, 1994, references Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53–2200, Revision 1, dated November 16, 1979, as an additional source of service information for the replacement of these fittings.

(1) If any cracking is found on any fitting, prior to further flight, replace the cracked fitting with a new 7075–T73 aluminum latch support fitting in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 1, dated January 28, 1993, or Revision 2, dated October 6, 1994. After the effective date of this AD, only Revision 2 of the service bulletin shall be used.

(2) If no cracking is found on any fitting, repeat the HFEC inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 18 months until the requirements of paragraph (b) of this AD are accomplished.

New Requirements of This AD

(b) Within 18 months after the effective date of this AD, replace all 7079–T6 aluminum latch support fittings with new 7075–T73 fittings, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, dated December 10, 1992, Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 1, dated January 28, 1993, or Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 2, dated October 6, 1994. Replacement of all latch support fittings constitutes terminating action for the inspection requirements of this AD.

(c) As of the effective date of this AD, no operator shall install any 7079–T6 aluminum latch support fitting of the cargo door on any airplane.

(d) 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 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Seattle ACO.

(e) 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.

(f) The actions shall be done in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, dated December 10, 1992; Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 1, dated January 28, 1993; or Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 2, dated October 6, 1994.

(1) The incorporation by reference of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, dated December 10, 1992, and Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 2, dated October 6, 1994, is approved by the Director of the Federal Register, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) The incorporation by reference of Boeing Service Bulletin 747–53A2377, Revision 1, dated January 28, 1993, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of March 11, 1993 (58 FR 11190, February 24, 1993).

(3) Copies may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707,

Seattle, Washington 98124–2207. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(g) This amendment becomes effective on October 20, 1998.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 28, 1998.

Vi L. Lipski,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 98–24247 Filed 9–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 97–NM–156–AD; Amdt. 39–10740; AD 98–18–24]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Industrie Model A320 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Airbus Model A320 series airplanes, that requires repetitive inspections to detect cracking in the inner flange of door frame 66, and corrective actions, if necessary. This amendment also provides for an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections. This amendment is prompted by issuance of mandatory continuing airworthiness information by a foreign civil airworthiness authority. The actions specified by this AD are intended to correct fatigue cracking in the inner flange of door frame 66, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

DATES: Effective October 20, 1998.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of October 20, 1998.

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Airbus Industrie, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France. This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Norman B. Martenson, Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–2110; fax (425) 227–1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Airbus Model A320 series airplanes was published in the **Federal Register** on May 12, 1998 (63 FR 26102). That action proposed to require repetitive inspections to detect cracking in the inner flange of door frame 66, and corrective actions, if necessary. That action also proposed to provide for an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the comments received.

One commenter supports the intent of the proposed rule.

Request To Allow Flight With Known Cracks

One commenter, the manufacturer, requests that the proposed AD be revised to allow operators to continue operation of an unrepaired airplane following detection of cracks, utilizing the follow-on inspections and conditions described in Airbus Service Bulletin A320–53–1071. The commenter states that the follow-on inspection intervals are based on fatigue test results and calculations of the crack propagation rate, depending on the crack length. The commenter also states that the structure of the Airbus Model A320 series airplane is classified as damage tolerant. Additionally, the commenter notes that the inspection program specified in the service bulletin was developed in order to prevent the need for extensive repairs of the airplane.

The FAA does not concur. It is the FAA's policy to require repair of known cracks prior to further flight, except in certain cases of unusual need, as discussed below.

This policy is based on the fact that such damaged airplanes do not conform to the FAA certificated type design, and therefore, are not airworthy until a properly approved repair is incorporated. While recognizing that repair deferrals may be necessary at times, the FAA policy is intended to minimize adverse human factors relating to the lack of reliability of long-term repetitive inspections, which may reduce the safety of the type certificated design if such repair deferrals are practiced routinely.

As noted above, the FAA's policy regarding flight with known cracks does allow deferral of repairs in certain cases, if there is an unusual need for a temporary deferral. Unusual needs include such circumstances as legitimate difficulty in acquiring parts to accomplish repairs. Under such conditions, the FAA may allow a temporary deferral of the repair, subject to a stringent inspection program acceptable to the FAA. The FAA acknowledges that the manufacturer has specified inspection intervals that are intended to allow continued operation with known cracks, and to prevent the need for extensive repairs. However, since the FAA is not aware of any unusual need for repair deferral in regard to this AD, the FAA has not evaluated these inspection intervals.

Additionally, the FAA policy applies to airplanes certificated to damage tolerance evaluation regulations as well as those not so certificated. Therefore, the commenter's statement that ''the Airbus Model A320 airplane structure is classified as damage tolerant'' is not relevant to the application of the FAA's policy in this regard.

The FAA considers the compliance times in this AD to be adequate to allow operators to acquire parts to have on hand in the event that a crack is detected during inspection. Therefore, the FAA has determined that, due to the safety implications and consequences associated with such cracking, any subject area that is found to be cracked must be repaired or modified prior to further flight. No change to the final rule is necessary.

Conclusion

After careful review of the available data, including the comments noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 132 Airbus Model A320 series airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 8 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required inspection, and that the average labor rate is $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the inspection required by this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $63,360, or $480 per airplane.

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