

CORRECTED: The first reference of the docket number in this copy of the AD was incorrectly stated as FAA-2016-9116. It has been corrected.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2016-9115; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-068-AD; Amendment 39-18903; AD 2017-11-04]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 767-200, -300, and -400ER series airplanes. This AD was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder (DAH) indicating that the fuselage skin lap splices are subject to widespread fatigue damage (WFD). This AD requires repetitive inspections to detect any crack in the fuselage skin at the skin lap splices, and corrective actions if necessary. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective July 13, 2017.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of July 13, 2017.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110 SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone: 562-797-1717; 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. It is also available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2016-9115.

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-2016-9115; 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 AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wayne Lockett, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6447; fax: 425-917-6590; email: wayne.lockett@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all The Boeing Company Model 767-200, -300, and -400ER series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on September 28, 2016 (81 FR 66553). The NPRM was prompted by an evaluation by the DAH indicating that the fuselage skin lap splices are subject to WFD. The NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections to detect any crack in the fuselage skin at the skin lap splices, and repair of any crack found during the inspection. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks at the fuselage skin lap splice, which can rapidly link up, possibly resulting in rapid decompression and loss of structural integrity of the airplane.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. The following presents the comments received on the NPRM and the FAA's response to each comment.

Support for the NPRM

Boeing and another commenter, Connor Blevins, stated their support for the content of the NPRM.

Effect of Winglets on Accomplishment of the Proposed Actions

Aviation Partners Boeing stated that accomplishing the Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01920SE does not affect the actions specified in the NPRM.

We concur with the commenter. We have redesignated paragraph (c) of the proposed AD as (c)(1) in this AD and added paragraph (c)(2) to state that installation of STC ST01920SE does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this final rule. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01920SE is installed, a “change in product” alternative method of compliance (AMOC) approval request is not necessary to comply with the requirements of 14 CFR 39.17.

Request for Clarification of Requirements

United Airlines (UAL) requested that we clarify whether Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-53A0264, Revision 1, dated April 25, 2016 (“ASB 767-53A0264 R1”) or the structural repair manual (SRM) takes precedence for inspection requirements and whether the operator is able to choose

which inspection method to utilize. UAL pointed out that Part 3 of ASB 767-53A0264 R1 specifies high frequency eddy current (HFEC) for the initial and repeat inspections, but the corresponding SRM repair provides the option of HFEC or low frequency eddy current inspections.

We agree that clarification is necessary. Note (a) of tables 1 through 9 of paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of ASB 767-53A0264 R1 terminates the AD-mandated inspections for any area under an approved repair. The repairs are evaluated with their own damage tolerance inspection program. The post-repair inspection program is different than the baseline inspections specified in Part 3 of ASB 767-53A0264 R1, and as mentioned previously, post-repair damage tolerance inspections are not required by this AD, but are airworthiness limitation items (ALIs) and are required by maintenance and operational rules. Any deviation from the post-repair ALI inspections requires FAA approval, but does not require an alternative method of compliance (AMOC). We have not revised this AD in this regard.

Request for Clarification of Repetitive Inspection Intervals

UAL requested that we clarify the repetitive inspection intervals for any Category B repair specified in the SRM and accomplished as specified in Part 8 of ASB 767-53A0264 R1. UAL pointed out that the Part 8 repetitive inspection intervals conflict with the inspection intervals of Category B repairs specified in the SRM. UAL specified that if a repair is accomplished at the times proposed in the NPRM, the repair is already past the initial inspection thresholds specified in the SRM.

We agree that there is a conflict between the service information and the Category B repair specified in the SRM, and that clarification is necessary. We have coordinated with Boeing regarding this issue. ASB 767-53A0264 R1 refers to the SRM for these repair instructions. Boeing has revised and published temporary revisions to the SRM that address this issue and these revisions provide an inspection threshold based on flight cycles after repair installation. Additionally, we have revised paragraph (h) of this AD to clarify that the post-repair damage tolerance inspections are not required by this AD, but are ALIs and are required by maintenance and operational rules. Any deviation from the post-repair ALI inspections requires FAA approval, but does not require an AMOC. We have also redesignated subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this AD with the changes described previously and minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM.

We also determined that these changes will not increase the economic burden on any operator or increase the scope of this AD.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

We reviewed Boeing ASB 767-53A0264 R1. The service information describes procedures for repetitive inspections and repair for any crack in the fuselage skin at the skin lap splices. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 332 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspections	168 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$14,280 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$14,280 per inspection cycle.	\$4,740,960 per inspection cycle.

The size of the area that requires repair must be determined before material and work-hour costs can be estimated. Additionally, materials for repairs must be supplied by the operator. Therefore, we cannot provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this 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 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

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will 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 that this AD:

- (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),
- (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.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 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):



2017-11-04 The Boeing Company: Amendment 39-18903; Docket No. FAA-2016-9115;
Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-068-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective July 13, 2017.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

(1) This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 767-200, -300, and -400ER series airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-53A0264, Revision 1, dated April 25, 2016 (“ASB 767-53A0264 R1”).

(2) Installation of Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01920SE (http://rgl.faa.gov/Regulatory_and_Guidance_Library/rgstc.nsf/0/59027F43B9A7486E86257B1D006591EE?OpenDocument&Highlight=st01920se) does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01920SE is installed, a “change in product” alternative method of compliance (AMOC) approval request is not necessary to comply with the requirements of 14 CFR 39.17.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder indicating that the fuselage skin lap splices are subject to widespread fatigue damage. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks at the fuselage skin lap splice, which can rapidly link up, possibly resulting in rapid decompression and loss of structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Repetitive Inspections and Corrective Actions

Except as specified by paragraph (i) of this AD, at the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of ASB 767-53A0264 R1: Do external surface high frequency eddy current (HFEC), internal surface HFEC, and external surface low frequency eddy current inspections, as applicable, to detect cracks in the fuselage skin lap splices, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of ASB 767-53A0264 R1. If any crack is found during any inspection required by this

AD, before further flight, repair in accordance with Part 8 of the Accomplishment Instructions of ASB 767-53A0264 R1. Repeat the inspections thereafter at the times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of ASB 767-53A0264 R1, as applicable.

(h) AD Provisions for Part 26 Supplemental Inspections

Repairs identified in Part 8 of ASB 767-53A0264 R1 specify post-modification airworthiness limitation inspections in compliance with 14 CFR 25.571(a)(3) at the modified locations, which support compliance with 14 CFR 121.1109(c)(2) or 129.109(b)(2). As airworthiness limitations, these inspections are required by maintenance and operational rules. It is therefore unnecessary to mandate them in this AD. Deviations from these inspections require FAA approval, but do not require an AMOC.

(i) Service Information Exception

Where ASB 767-53A0264 R1 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.

(j) Credit for Previous Actions

This paragraph provides credit for the actions required by paragraph (g) of this AD, if those actions were performed before the effective date of this AD using Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-53A0264, dated May 12, 2015.

(k) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Seattle 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 (l)(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) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair, modification, or alteration 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. To be approved, the repair method, modification deviation, or alteration deviation must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(4) Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: For service information that contains steps that are labeled as Required for Compliance (RC), the provisions of paragraphs (k)(4)(i) and (k)(4)(ii) of this AD apply.

(i) The steps labeled as RC, including substeps under an RC step and any figures identified in an RC step, must be done to comply with the AD. An AMOC is required for any deviations to RC steps, including substeps and identified figures.

(ii) Steps not labeled as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the RC steps, including substeps and identified figures, can still be done as specified, and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition.

(l) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Wayne Lockett, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle ACO, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6447; fax: 425-917-6590; email: wayne.lockett@faa.gov.

(2) Service information identified in this AD that is not incorporated by reference is available at the addresses specified in paragraphs (m)(3) and (m)(4) of this AD.

(m) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 767-53A0264, Revision 1, dated April 25, 2016.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For Boeing service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110 SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone: 562-797-1717; Internet: <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(4) You may view this 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.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 15, 2017.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.