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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2023-0934; Project Identifier AD-2022-01443-T; Amendment 39-22503; AD 2023-14-03]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY:

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION:

Final rule.

SUMMARY:

The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 747-8F and 747-8 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by a report of cracks in stringers, common to the end fittings, on the aft side of the bulkhead at station (STA) 2598. This AD requires detailed inspections of the stringers, common to the end fittings, forward and aft of the bulkhead at a certain station for cracking and applicable on-condition actions. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES:

This AD is effective September 6, 2023.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of September 6, 2023.

ADDRESSES:

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at *regulations.gov* under Docket No. FAA-2023-0934; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal

holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, any comments received, and other information. The address for Docket Operations is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- 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; website myboeingfleet.com.
- You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2023-0934.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stefanie Roesli, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3964; email: stefanie.n.roesli@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The FAA 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 (Boeing) Model 747-8F and 747-8 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the **Federal Register** on May 8, 2023 ([88 FR 29555](#)). The NPRM was prompted by a report indicating the presence of cracks in stringers, common to the end fittings, at stringer location S-42L/R and S-46L/R on the aft side of the bulkhead at station 2598. The airplane had accumulated 5,517 total flight cycles and 32,468 total flight hours at time the cracks were found. In addition, during foreign object debris (FOD) inspections Boeing found five cracks in stringers, common to the end fittings, at stringer locations S-2L, S-6L, S-8L, and S-2R on the forward side and S-5L on the aft side of the bulkhead at STA 2598 on two airplanes. The FAA has also received reports of similar cracks found on additional airplanes. In all cases, the cracks were found in the side walls of the stringers and had grown in longitudinal and transverse directions, but there was no other damage or deformation in the surrounding area. An investigation by Boeing found that during airplane assembly, un-shimmed or incorrectly shimmed gaps that were larger than engineering requirements caused excessive and sustained internal tensile stresses and resulted in stress corrosion cracking in the stringers. In the NPRM, the FAA proposed to require detailed inspections of the stringers, common to the end fittings, forward and aft of the bulkhead at a certain station for cracking and applicable on-condition actions. The FAA is issuing this AD to address stress corrosion cracking in the stringers. This condition, if not addressed, could lead to a failure of the skin adjacent to the bulkhead at STA 2598, which could adversely affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

Discussion of Final Airworthiness Directive

Comments

The FAA received a comment from Boeing, who supported the NPRM without change.

Conclusion

The FAA reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety requires adopting this AD as proposed. Accordingly, the FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products. Except for minor editorial changes, this AD is adopted as proposed in the NPRM. None of the changes will increase the economic burden on any operator.

Related Service Information Under [1 CFR Part 51](#)

The FAA reviewed Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 747-53A2911 RB, dated November 3, 2022. This service information specifies procedures for repetitive detailed inspections of the stringers, common to the end fittings, forward and aft of the bulkhead at STA 2598, for any crack, and applicable on-condition actions. On-condition actions include repair. 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 **ADDRESSES**.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 42 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Detailed inspection	91 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$7,735 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$7,735 per inspection cycle	\$324,870 per inspection cycle.

The FAA estimates the following costs to do any necessary repairs that would be required based on the results of the inspection. The agency has no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need these repairs:

On-condition Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
Repair	13 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$1,105	\$600	\$1,705 (per stringer).

The FAA has included all known costs in its cost estimate. According to the manufacturer, however, some or all of the costs of this AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected operators.

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.

The FAA is 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) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, 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.

List of Subjects in [14 CFR Part 39](#)

- Air transportation
- Aircraft
- Aviation safety
- Incorporation by reference
- Safety

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:

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective September 6, 2023.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 747-8F and 747-8 series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

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

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report of cracks in stringers, common to the end fittings, on the aft side of the bulkhead at station (STA) 2598. The FAA is issuing this AD to address stress corrosion cracking in the stringers. This condition, if not addressed, could lead to a failure of the skin adjacent to the bulkhead at STA 2598, which could adversely affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Required Actions

Except as specified by paragraph (h) of this AD: At the applicable times specified in the “Compliance” paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 747-53A2911 RB, dated November 3, 2022, do all applicable actions identified in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 747-53A2911 RB, dated November 3, 2022.

Note 1 to paragraph (g): Guidance for accomplishing the actions required by this AD can be found in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-53A2911, dated November 3, 2022, which is referred to in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 747-53A2911 RB, dated November 3, 2022.

(h) Exceptions to Service Information Specifications

(1) Where the Compliance Time column of the table in the “Compliance” paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 747-53A2911 RB, dated November 3, 2022, uses the phrase “the original issue date of Requirements Bulletin 747-53A2911 RB,” this AD requires using “the effective date of this AD.”

(2) Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 747–53A2911 RB, dated November 3, 2022, specifies contacting Boeing for repair instructions: This AD requires doing the repair using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i) of this AD.

(i) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager AIR–520 Continued Operational Safety Branch, 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 responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the certification office, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j) 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 responsible Flight Standards 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 Company Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, AIR–520 Continued Operational Safety Branch, FAA, 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.

(j) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Stefanie Roesli, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206–231–3964; email: stefanie.n.roesli@faa.gov.

(k) 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 Requirements Bulletin 747–53A2911 RB, dated November 3, 2022.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For 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; website myboeingfleet.com.

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

(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, fr.inspection@nara.gov, or go to: www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.

Issued on July 8, 2023.

Michael Linegang,

Acting Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

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