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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2001-NM-345-AD; Amendment 39-12553; AD 2001-25-01]

RIN 2120-AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC-8-33, -43, -51, -52, -53, and -55 Series Airplanes; Model DC-8F-54, and -55 Series Airplanes; and Model DC-8-61, -61F, -62, -62F, -63, -63F, -71, -71F, -72, -72F, -73, and -73F Series Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Final rule; request for comments.

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**SUMMARY:** This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC-8-33, -43, -51, -52, -53, and -55 series airplanes; Model DC-8F-54, and -55 series airplanes; and Model DC-8-61, -61F, -62, -62F, -63, -63F, -71, -71F, -72, -72F, -73, and -73F series airplanes. This action requires repetitive inspections of the electrical connectors of the explosive cartridge wiring of the engine fire extinguisher containers to verify if the identification number labels are installed and legible; repetitive electrical tests of all explosive cartridge wiring of the engine fire extinguisher containers to verify proper installation and function; and corrective actions, if necessary. This action is necessary to detect and correct cross-wired electrical connectors of the fire extinguishing system, which could release fire extinguishing agent into the incorrect engine nacelle in the event of an engine fire.

**DATES:** Effective December 20, 2001.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of December 20, 2001.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before February 4, 2002.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001-NM-345-AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Comments may be submitted via fax to (425) 227-1232. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: [9-anm-iarcomment@faa.gov](mailto:9-anm-iarcomment@faa.gov). Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2001-NM-345-AD" in the subject line and need not be submitted in triplicate. Comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII text.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Aircraft Group, Long Beach Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Data and Service Management, Dept. C1-L5A (D800-0024). This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, 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.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** William Bond, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM-140L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5253; fax (562) 627-5210.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FAA has received reports of electrical connectors of the engine fire extinguishing agent containers being cross-wired on certain McDonnell Douglas DC-8 series airplanes. The fire extinguishing system on these airplanes consists of independent left- and right-wing fixed fire extinguisher installations. Each wing installation includes two containers with two fire extinguishing agent deployment lines per container. Either container of a wing installation may be discharged into either engine nacelle of the same wing. In one incident, six of eight electrical connectors of the explosive cartridges were found installed on the incorrect cartridge/discharge valve. These reported incidents were caused by unclear maintenance instructions and an inadequate wire harness design that does not prevent cross-connecting the electrical connectors. Cross-wired electrical connectors of the fire extinguishing system, if not corrected, could release fire extinguishing agent into the incorrect engine nacelle in the event of an engine fire.

#### **Explanation of Relevant Service Information**

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC8-26A046, dated November 7, 2001. The service bulletin describes procedures for repetitive inspections of the electrical connectors of the explosive cartridge wiring of the fire extinguisher containers to verify if the identification number labels are installed and legible; and installation of a label or replacement of the label with a new label, if necessary. The service bulletin also describes procedures for repetitive electrical tests of the explosive cartridge wiring of the fire extinguisher container to verify proper installation and function, and for troubleshooting and repairing the wiring of the Firex Discharge system, if necessary.

#### **Explanation of the Requirements of the Rule**

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other McDonnell Douglas Model DC-8-33, -43, -51, -52, -53, and -55 series airplanes; Model DC-8F-54, and -55 series airplanes; and Model DC-8-61, -61F, -62, -62F, -63, -63F, -71, -71F, -72, -72F, -73, and -73F series airplanes of the same type design, this AD is being issued to detect and correct cross-wired electrical connectors of the fire extinguishing system, which could release fire extinguishing agent into the incorrect engine nacelle in the event of an engine fire. This AD requires accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously, except as discussed below.

#### **Differences Between Proposed Rule and Service Bulletin**

Operators should note that, although the service bulletin recommends accomplishing the inspection within two days (from the issue date of the service bulletin), the FAA has determined that a compliance time of 30 days will not adversely affect safety, and will allow the inspections and tests

to be performed at a base during regularly scheduled maintenance where special equipment and trained maintenance personnel will be available if necessary. In addition, there has only been one reported engine fire in the entire DC-8 worldwide fleet in the last five years. Therefore, we find that a compliance time of 30 days is warranted.

### **Interim Action**

This is considered to be interim action until final action is identified, at which time the FAA may consider further rulemaking.

### **Determination of Rule's Effective Date**

Since a situation exists that requires the immediate adoption of this regulation, it is found that notice and opportunity for prior public comment hereon are impracticable, and that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

### **Comments Invited**

Although this action is in the form of a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and, thus, was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this 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 under the caption ADDRESSES. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the AD action and determining whether additional rulemaking action would be needed.

Submit comments using the following format:

- Organize comments issue-by-issue. For example, discuss a request to change the compliance time and a request to change the service bulletin reference as two separate issues.
- For each issue, state what specific change to the AD is being requested.
- Include justification (e.g., reasons or data) for each request.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the rule that might suggest a need to modify the 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 that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this AD will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this rule must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket Number 2001-NM-345-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

### **Regulatory Impact**

The regulations adopted herein 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. Therefore, it is determined that this rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

The FAA has determined that this regulation is an emergency regulation that must be issued immediately to correct an unsafe condition in aircraft, and that it is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866. It has been determined further that this action involves an emergency regulation under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979). If it is determined that this emergency regulation otherwise would be significant under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures, a final regulatory evaluation will be prepared and placed in the Rules Docket. A copy of it, if filed, 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.

### **Sec. 39.13 [Amended]**

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

# AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE



Aircraft Certification Service  
Washington, DC

U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

*We post ADs on the internet at "av-info.faa.gov"*

The following Airworthiness Directive issued by the Federal Aviation Administration in accordance with the provisions of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 39, applies to an aircraft model of which our records indicate you may be the registered owner. Airworthiness Directives affect aviation safety and are regulations which require immediate attention. You are cautioned that no person may operate an aircraft to which an Airworthiness Directive applies, except in accordance with the requirements of the Airworthiness Directive (reference 14 CFR part 39, subpart 39.3).

**2001-25-01 McDonnell Douglas:** Amendment 39-12553. Docket 2001-NM-345-AD.

*Applicability:* Model DC-8-33, -43, -51, -52, -53, and -55 series airplanes; Model DC-8F-54, and -55 series airplanes; and Model DC-8-61, -61F, -62, -62F, -63, -63F, -71, -71F, -72, -72F, -73, and -73F series airplanes; certificated in any category; as listed in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC8-26A046, dated November 7, 2001.

**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 detect and correct cross-wired electrical connectors of the fire extinguishing system, which could release fire extinguishing agent into the incorrect engine nacelle in the event of an engine fire, accomplish the following:

## **Repetitive Inspections and Tests, and Corrective Action(s), if Necessary**

(a) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, do the action(s) specified in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this AD per Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC8-26A046, dated November 7, 2001.

(1) Do an inspection of the electrical connectors of the explosive cartridge wiring of the engine fire extinguisher containers to verify if the identification number labels are installed and legible. If any identification number label is missing or is not legible, before further flight, install a label or replace the label with a new label, as applicable. Repeat the inspection after each maintenance action for the Firex Discharge system.

(2) Do an electrical test of all explosive cartridge wiring of the engine fire extinguisher containers to verify proper installation and function, using the cockpit warning lamps. If the lamp fails to illuminate, before further flight, troubleshoot and repair the wiring of the Firex Discharge system. Repeat the test after each maintenance action for the Firex Discharge system.

**Note 2:** Inspections, tests, and corrective actions, if necessary, done per Boeing BOECOM M-7200-01-02632, dated November 5, 2001, before the effective date of this AD, are considered acceptable for compliance with the requirements of this AD.

## Alternative Methods of Compliance

(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, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA. 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 3:** Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles ACO.

## Special Flight Permits

(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.

## Incorporation by Reference

(d) The actions shall be done in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin DC8-26A046, dated November 7, 2001. 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 Boeing Commercial Aircraft Group, Long Beach Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Data and Service Management, Dept. C1-L5A (D800-0024). Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, 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.

## Effective Date

(e) This amendment becomes effective on December 20, 2001.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on November 29, 2001.

**Ali Bahrami,**

*Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 01-30084 Filed 12-4-01; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-U**