

[Federal Register: February 25, 2002 (Volume 67, Number 37)]  
[Rules and Regulations ]  
[Page 8475-8476]  
From the Federal Register Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov]  
[DOCID:fr25fe02-3]

---

---

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. 2001-NM-203-AD; Amendment 39-12663; AD 2002-04-06]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 727 Series Airplanes**

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

**ACTION:** Final rule.

---

**SUMMARY:** This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to all Boeing Model 727 series airplanes, that requires repetitive inspections for cracking of the upper chord of the rear spar of the wing, and corrective action, if necessary. This action is necessary to find and fix such cracking, which could result in fuel leaking through the cracks, reduced structural integrity of the wing, and separation of the wing from the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

**DATES:** Effective April 1, 2002.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of April 1, 2002.

**ADDRESSES:** The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. 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:** Duong Tran, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2773; fax (425) 227-1181.

**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 all Boeing Model 727 series airplanes was published in the Federal Register on November 28, 2001 (66 FR 59384). That action proposed to require repetitive inspections for cracking of the upper chord of the rear spar of the wing, and corrective action, if necessary.

## **Comments**

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. No comments were submitted in response to the proposal or the FAA's determination of the cost to the public.

## **Conclusion**

The FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule as proposed.

## **Cost Impact**

There are approximately 1,375 Boeing Model 727 series airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 912 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this AD, that it will take approximately 12 work hours per airplane to accomplish the required inspections, and that the average labor rate is \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$656,640, or \$720 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

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 that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted. The cost impact figures discussed in AD rulemaking actions represent only the time necessary to perform the specific actions actually required by the AD. These figures typically do not include incidental costs, such as the time required to gain access and close up, planning time, or time necessitated by other administrative actions.

## **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 final rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

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.

### **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).

**2002-04-06 Boeing:** Amendment 39-12663. Docket 2001-NM-203-AD.

*Applicability:* All Model 727 series airplanes, 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 find and fix cracking of the upper chord of the rear spar of the wing, which could result in fuel leaking through the cracks, reduced structural integrity of the wing, and separation of the wing from the airplane, accomplish the following:

## **Repetitive Inspections**

(a) Prior to the accumulation of 20,000 total flight cycles, or within 500 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever is later, do detailed visual and high frequency eddy current inspections for cracking of the upper chord of the rear spar of the wing, according to Boeing Service Bulletin 727-57-0184, dated August 16, 2001. The detailed visual inspection must include an inspection of the surface finish for damage or deterioration (discoloration, blistering, raised or rough areas), as described in the service bulletin. Repeat all inspections every 4,500 flight cycles.

**Note 2:** For the purposes of this AD, a detailed visual inspection is defined as: "An intensive visual examination of a specific structural area, system, installation, or assembly to detect damage, failure, or irregularity. Available lighting is normally supplemented with a direct source of good lighting at intensity deemed appropriate by the inspector. Inspection aids such as mirror, magnifying lenses, etc., may be used. Surface cleaning and elaborate access procedures may be required."

## **Repairs**

(b) If any cracking, damage, or deterioration is found during any inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD: Before further flight, do paragraph (b)(1) or (b)(2) of this AD, as applicable.

(1) If any damage or deterioration but no cracking is found, remove the finish, blend the area

smooth, and reapply the finish according to Boeing Service Bulletin 727-57-0184, dated August 16, 2001.

(i) If the blend-out is within the limits specified in Section 57-10-1 of the Boeing 727 Structural Repair Manual (SRM), no further action is required by this paragraph.

(ii) If the blend-out is outside the limits specified in Section 57-10-1 of the Boeing 727 SRM, before further flight, repair according to a method approved by the Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA; or according to data meeting the type certification basis of the airplane approved by a Boeing Company Designated Engineering Representative (DER) who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make such findings. For a repair method to be approved by the Manager, Seattle ACO, as required by this paragraph, the Manager's approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) If any cracking is found, repair according to a method approved by the Manager, Seattle ACO, or according to data meeting the type certification basis of the airplane approved by a Boeing Company DER who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make such findings. For a repair method to be approved by the Manager, Seattle ACO, as required by this paragraph, the Manager's approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

### **Alternative Methods of Compliance**

(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 ACO. 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.

### **Special Flight Permits**

(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.

### **Incorporation by Reference**

(e) Except as provided by paragraphs (b)(1)(ii) and (b)(2) of this AD, the actions shall be done in accordance with Boeing Service Bulletin 727-57-0184, dated August 16, 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 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.

### **Effective Date**

(f) This amendment becomes effective on April 1, 2002.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on February 14, 2002.

**Charles D. Huber,**

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

[FR Doc. 02-4112 Filed 2-22-02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**