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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2016-5458; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-027-AD; Amendment 39-18473; AD 2016-07-28]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

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

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**SUMMARY:** We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), and DC-9-87 (MD-87) airplanes, and Model MD-88 airplanes. This AD requires repetitive eddy current high frequency (ETHF) inspections for any cracking in the left and right side center wing lower skin, and corrective actions if necessary. This AD was prompted by reports of cracking at certain stringers, associated end fittings, and skins in the center wing fuel tank where the stringers meet the end fittings. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking in the center wing lower skin. Such cracking could cause structural failure of the wings.

**DATES:** This AD is effective April 26, 2016.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of April 26, 2016.

We must receive comments on this AD by May 26, 2016.

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.
- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this final rule, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, MC D800-0019, Long Beach, CA 90846-0001; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 2; fax 206-766-5683; 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-2016-5458.

## **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-2016-5458; 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 street address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Haytham Alaidy, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5224; fax: 562-627-5210; email: [haytham.alaidy@faa.gov](mailto:haytham.alaidy@faa.gov).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Discussion**

We have received reports of cracks at stringers S-15, S-16, or S-17, associated end fittings, and skins in the center wing fuel tank where the stringers meet the end fittings near Xcw=13 and Xcw=15. If stringer S-15, S-16, or S-17 is cracked in this area and there is a crack in the skin adjacent to the stringer crack, the skin crack could grow to a critical length before it can be found by routine maintenance inspections. This condition, if not corrected, could result in structural failure of the wings. We are issuing this AD to correct the unsafe condition on these products.

### **Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51**

We reviewed Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016. The service information describes procedures for repetitive ETHF inspections for any cracking in the left and right side center wing lower skin, and corrective actions. 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.

### **FAA's Determination**

We are issuing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of these same type designs.

### **AD Requirements**

This AD requires accomplishing the actions specified in the service information described previously, except as discussed under "Differences Between this AD and the Service Information. For

information on the procedures and compliance times, see this service information at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2016-5458.

The phrase "corrective actions" is used in this AD. Corrective actions correct or address any condition found. Corrective actions in an AD could include, for example, repairs.

### Differences Between This AD and the Service Information

Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016, specifies to contact the manufacturer for certain instructions, but this AD requires accomplishment of repair methods, modification deviations, and alteration deviations in one of the following ways:

- In accordance with a method that we approve; or
- Using data that meet the certification basis of the airplane, and that have been approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) whom we have authorized to make those findings.

### FAA's Justification and Determination of the Effective Date

An unsafe condition exists that requires the immediate adoption of this AD. The FAA has found that the risk to the flying public justifies waiving notice and comment prior to adoption of this rule because we have received reports indicating cracking at certain stringers, associated end fittings, and skins in the center wing fuel tank where the stringers meet the end fittings. This condition, if not corrected, could cause structural failure of the wings.

Therefore, we find that notice and opportunity for prior public comment are impracticable and that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

### Comments Invited

This AD is a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment. However, we invite you to send any written data, views, or arguments about this AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include the docket number FAA-2016-5458 and Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-027-AD at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this AD.

### Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 395 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
Inspection	14 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$1,190 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$1,190 per inspection cycle	\$470,050 per inspection cycle.

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to 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):



**2016-07-28 The Boeing Company:** Amendment 39-18473; Docket No. FAA-2016-5458; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-027-AD.

**(a) Effective Date**

This AD is effective April 26, 2016.

**(b) Affected ADs**

None.

**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), and DC-9-87 (MD-87) airplanes, and Model MD-88 airplanes, certificated in any category.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by reports of cracking at certain stringers, associated end fittings, and skins in the center wing fuel tank where the stringers meet the end fittings. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking in the center wing lower skin. Such cracking could cause structural failure of the wings.

**(f) Compliance**

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

**(g) Inspection**

Except as required by paragraph (h)(1) and (h)(2) of this AD, at the applicable time specified in paragraph 1.E., "Compliance," of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016: Do an eddy current high frequency (ETHF) inspection for any cracking in the left and right side center wing lower skin, and do all applicable corrective actions; except as required by paragraph (h)(3) of this AD. Do all applicable corrective actions before further flight. Repeat the inspection thereafter at the intervals specified in paragraph 1.E., "Compliance," of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016.

## **(h) Exception to the Service Information**

(1) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016, 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.

(2) The Condition column of paragraph 1.E., "Compliance," of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016, refers to total flight cycles "as of the original issue date of this service bulletin." This AD, however, applies to the airplanes with the specified total flight cycles as of the effective date of this AD.

(3) If any crack is found during any inspection required by this AD, and Boeing Alert Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016, specifies to contact Boeing for appropriate action, and specifies that action as "RC" (Required for Compliance): Before further flight, 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, Los Angeles 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 (j) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-LAACO-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, Los Angeles 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 required by paragraph (h)(3) of this AD: For service information that contains steps that are labeled as Required for Compliance (RC), the provisions of paragraphs (i)(4)(i) and (i)(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.

## **(j) Related Information**

For more information about this AD, contact Haytham Alaidy, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5224; fax: 562-627-5210; email: haytham.alaidy@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 Service Bulletin MD80-57A244, dated March 3, 2016.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For Boeing service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, MC D800-0019, Long Beach, CA 90846-0001; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 2; fax 206-766-5683; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(4) 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.

(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 March 30, 2016.

Victor Wicklund,  
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.