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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002-NM-147-AD; Amendment 39-12848; AD 2002-16-09]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model 717-200 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to all McDonnell Douglas Model 717-200 airplanes. This action requires repetitive tests to detect failure of the solenoid operated shut-off valve (SOV) of the inboard and outboard spoiler actuator assemblies, and corrective action if necessary. This action is necessary to detect and correct conditions associated with high electrical resistance in the solenoid, which, in combination with the failure of a spoiler actuator, could result in reduced controllability of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Effective September 3, 2002.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of September 3, 2002.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before October 15, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM-114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002-NM-147-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. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain "Docket No. 2002-NM-147-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: Technical Information: Thomas Phan, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Branch, ANM-130L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5342; fax (562) 627-5210.

Other Information: Sandi Carli, Airworthiness Directive Technical Editor/Writer; telephone (425) 687-4243, fax (425) 227-1232. Questions or comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: sandi.carli@faa.gov. Questions or comments sent via the Internet as attached electronic files must be formatted in Microsoft Word 97 for Windows or ASCII text.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA has recently been advised of failed tests of spoiler actuator assemblies due to failure of the solenoid-operated shut-off valve (SOV) on McDonnell Douglas Model 717-200 airplanes in service and during final assembly. Analysis by the manufacturer indicates that these solenoids contain high electrical resistance, which can be detected only during a spoiler return-to-service (RTS) test. The cause of the high resistance is under investigation. The presence of high electrical resistance in the solenoid is considered a latent failure. The combined failure of the solenoid-operated SOV and the spoiler actuator will cause a single spoiler panel hardover, and could result in reduced controllability of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 717-27A0025, dated June 11, 2002, which describes procedures for repetitive tests to determine the electrical resistance within the solenoid of the inboard and outboard spoiler actuator assemblies. Operators may choose to perform either a spoiler actuator RTS test or a spoiler system RTS test. Corrective actions for any failed test include replacing the spoiler actuator assembly with a new spoiler actuator assembly, and correcting all faults in the centralized fault display system (CFDS).

Explanation of the Requirements of the Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design, this AD is being issued to detect and correct conditions associated with high electrical resistance in the solenoid of the spoiler actuator assembly, which, in combination with the failure of a spoiler actuator, could result in reduced controllability of the airplane. This AD requires accomplishment of the actions specified in the alert service bulletin described previously.

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 2002-NM-147-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 final 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 "www.airweb.faa.gov/rg1"

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).

2002-16-09 McDonnell Douglas: Amendment 39-12848. Docket 2002-NM-147-AD.

Applicability: All Model 717-200 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 detect and correct conditions associated with high electrical resistance in the solenoid of the spoiler actuator assembly, which, in combination with the failure of a spoiler actuator, could result in reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Repetitive Tests

(a) Within 60 days after the effective date of this AD, determine the electrical resistance within the solenoid of the inboard and outboard spoiler actuator assemblies by doing either a spoiler actuator return-to-service (RTS) test or a spoiler system RTS test, in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 717-27A0025, dated June 11, 2002. Repeat either test thereafter at least every 550 flight hours.

Corrective Action

(b) If any failure is noted during any test required by paragraph (a) of this AD: Before further flight, perform applicable corrective actions (including replacing the spoiler actuator assembly with a new spoiler actuator assembly and correcting all faults in the centralized fault display system (CFDS)), in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 717-27A0025, dated June 11, 2002, and repeat the test until a successful complete RTS test has been achieved.

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, 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 2: 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

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with Secs. 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) The actions must be done in accordance with Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 717-27A0025, dated June 11, 2002. 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

(f) This amendment becomes effective on September 3, 2002.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on August 7, 2002.

Vi Lipski,

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 02-20514 Filed 8-15-02; 8:45 am]

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