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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2008-1325; Directorate Identifier 2008-NM-157-AD; Amendment 39-16024; AD 2009-20-01]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 727-281 Airplanes Equipped With Auxiliary Fuel Tanks Installed in Accordance With Supplemental Type Certificate SA3449NM

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Boeing Model 727-281 airplanes. This AD requires deactivation of Rogerson Aircraft Corporation auxiliary fuel tanks. This AD results from fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer, which identified potential unsafe conditions but has not provided associated corrective actions. We are issuing this AD to prevent the potential of ignition sources inside fuel tanks, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in fuel tank explosions and consequent loss of the airplane.

DATES: This AD is effective October 26, 2009.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; 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 address for the Docket Office (telephone 800-647-5527) is the Document Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Serj Harutunian, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM-140L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5254; fax (562) 627-5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to certain Boeing Model 727-281 airplanes. That NPRM was published in the Federal Register on December 23, 2008 (73 FR 78675). That NPRM proposed to require deactivation of Rogerson Aircraft Corporation auxiliary fuel tanks.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We considered the comment received. Boeing supports the NPRM.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD as proposed.

Costs of Compliance

This AD would affect about 17 U.S.-registered airplanes. The following table provides the estimated costs to comply with this AD.

Estimated Costs

Action	Work hours	Average labor rate per hour	Parts	Cost per airplane	Fleet cost
Report	1	\$80	None	\$80	\$1,360
Preparation of tank deactivation procedure	80	\$80	None	\$6,400	Up to \$108,800
Physical tank deactivation	30	\$80	\$1,200	\$3,600	Up to \$61,200

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), 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.

You can find our regulatory evaluation and the estimated costs of compliance in the AD Docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, 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 AD:



2009-20-01 Boeing: Amendment 39-16024. Docket No. FAA-2008-1325; Directorate Identifier 2008-NM-157-AD.

Effective Date

(a) This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective October 26, 2009.

Affected ADs

(b) None.

Applicability

(c) This AD applies to Boeing Model 727-281 airplanes, certificated in any category, and equipped with auxiliary fuel tanks installed in accordance with Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) SA3449NM.

Unsafe Condition

(d) This AD results from fuel system reviews conducted by the manufacturer. We are issuing this AD to prevent the potential of ignition sources inside fuel tanks, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in fuel tank explosions and consequent loss of the airplane.

Compliance

(e) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

Report

(f) Within 60 days after the effective date of this AD, submit a report to the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA. Information collection requirements in this AD are approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) and are assigned OMB Control Number 2120-0056. The report must include the following information:

- (1) The airplane registration and auxiliary tank STC number installed.
- (2) The usage frequency in terms of total number of flights per year and total number of flights for which the auxiliary tank is used.

Prevent Usage of Auxiliary Fuel Tanks

(g) Within 90 days after the effective date of this AD, deactivate the auxiliary fuel tanks, in accordance with a deactivation procedure approved by the Manager of the Los Angeles ACO. Any auxiliary tank component that remains on the airplane must be secured and must have no effect on the continued operational safety and airworthiness of the airplane. Deactivation may not result in the need for additional instructions for continued airworthiness.

Note 1: Appendix A of this AD provides criteria that might need to be included in the deactivation procedure. Timely approval is dependent on early submittal of the deactivation procedures.

Note 2: For technical information, contact Dan Zevallos, Director of Program Management, Rogerson Aircraft Corporation, 2201 Alton Parkway, Irvine, California 92606; telephone (949) 442-2306; fax (949) 442-2322.

Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(h)(1) The Manager, Los Angeles ACO, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. Send information to ATTN: Serj Harutunian, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM-140L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712-4137; telephone (562) 627-5254; fax (562) 627-5210.

(2) To request a different method of compliance or a different compliance time for this AD, follow the procedures in 14 CFR 39.19. Before using any approved AMOC on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify your principal maintenance inspector (PMI) or principal avionics inspector (PAI), as appropriate, or lacking a principal inspector, your local Flight Standards District Office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

Material Incorporated by Reference

(i) None.

Appendix A

Deactivation Criteria

The auxiliary fuel tank deactivation procedure required by paragraph (g) of this AD might need to address the following actions.

(1) Permanently drain auxiliary fuel tanks, and clear them of fuel vapors to eliminate the possibility of out-gassing of fuel vapors from the emptied auxiliary tank.

Note: If applicable, removing the bladder might help eliminate out-gassing.

(2) Disconnect all electrical connections from the fuel quantity indication system (FQIS), fuel pumps if applicable, float switches, and all other electrical connections required for auxiliary tank operation, and stow them at the auxiliary tank interface.

(3) Disconnect all pneumatic connections if applicable, cap them at the pneumatic source, and secure them.

(4) Disconnect all fuel feed and fuel vent plumbing interfaces with airplane original equipment manufacturer (OEM) tanks, cap them at the airplane tank side, and secure them in accordance with a method approved by the FAA; one approved method is specified in AC 25-8 Auxiliary Fuel Tank Systems Installations. In order to eliminate the possibility of structural deformation during cabin decompression, leave open and secure the disconnected auxiliary fuel tank vent lines.

(5) Pull and collar all circuit breakers used to operate the auxiliary tank.

(6) Revise the weight and balance document, if required, and obtain FAA approval.

(7) Amend the applicable sections of the applicable airplane flight manual (AFM) to indicate that the auxiliary fuel tank is deactivated. Remove auxiliary fuel tank operating procedures to ensure that only the OEM fuel system operational procedures are contained in the AFM. Amend the Limitations

Section of the AFM to indicate that the AFM Supplement for the STC is not in effect. Place a placard in the flight deck indicating that the auxiliary tank is deactivated. The AFM revisions specified in this paragraph may be accomplished by inserting a copy of this AD into the AFM.

(8) Amend the applicable sections of the applicable airplane maintenance manual to remove auxiliary tank maintenance procedures.

(9) After the auxiliary fuel tank is deactivated, accomplish procedures such as leak checks and pressure checks deemed necessary before returning the airplane to service. These procedures must include verification that the airplane FQIS and fuel distribution systems have not been adversely affected.

(10) Include with the operator's proposed procedures any relevant information or additional steps that are deemed necessary by the operator to comply with the deactivation and return the airplane to service.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on September 11, 2009.

Stephen P. Boyd,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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