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## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

#### **14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2016-9566; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-191-AD; Amendment 39-18927; AD 2017-12-12]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

#### **Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes**

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

**ACTION:** Final rule.

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**SUMMARY:** We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 757-200, -200PF, and -200CB series airplanes. This AD was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder (DAH) indicating that certain fuselage circumferential splice plates are subject to widespread fatigue damage (WFD). This AD requires repetitive low frequency eddy current (LFEC) inspections for cracks of certain circumferential splice plates, and repairs if necessary. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** This AD is effective July 25, 2017.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of July 25, 2017.

**ADDRESSES:** For service information identified in this final rule, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone: 562-797-1717; 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-2016-9566.

#### **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-2016-9566; 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 (phone: 800-647-5527) is Docket 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:** Eric Schrieber, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5348; fax: 562-627-5210; email: eric.schrieber@faa.gov.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Discussion**

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all The Boeing Company Model 757-200, -200PF, and -200CB series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on January 5, 2017 (82 FR 1262). The NPRM was prompted by a report indicating that the fuselage circumferential splice plates along the center fastener rows, forward and aft of station 900 and station 1180 splice centerlines, are susceptible to WFD. The NPRM proposed to require repetitive LFEC inspections for cracks of certain circumferential splice plates, and repairs if necessary. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct any such cracks, which could lead to the failure of a principal structural element and could adversely affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

### **Comments**

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. The following presents the comments received on the NPRM and the FAA's response to each comment.

### **Support for the NPRM**

Boeing and United Airlines stated that they support the NPRM.

### **Effect of Winglets on Accomplishment of the Proposed Actions**

Aviation Partners Boeing (APB) stated that the installation of winglets per Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01518SE does not affect the accomplishment of the manufacturer's service instructions.

We concur with the commenter's statement. We have redesignated paragraph (c) of the proposed AD as paragraph (c)(1) of this AD and added paragraph (c)(2) to this AD to state that installation of STC ST01518SE does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Therefore, for airplanes on which ST01518SE is installed, a "change in product" alternative method of compliance (AMOC) approval request is not necessary to comply with the requirements of 14 CFR 39.17.

### **Effects of Modification From Passenger to Freighter Configuration on the Proposed Actions**

FedEx Express (FedEx) stated that VT Aerospace, which holds STC ST03562AT for modification of an airplane from a passenger to a freighter configuration, confirmed that STC ST03562AT does not affect the accomplishment of the manufacturer's service instructions. FedEx otherwise had no objection to the NPRM.

We agree with the commenter's statement that STC ST03562AT does not affect the accomplishment of the manufacturer's service instructions. Therefore, the installation of STC

ST03562AT does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Because this STC is installed on a limited number of airplanes, we have determined that it is not necessary to revise this AD to include a provision that explicitly states the effect of this STC on compliance.

**Conclusion**

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this AD with the change described previously and minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM.

We also determined that these changes will not increase the economic burden on any operator or increase the scope of this AD.

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

We reviewed Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757-53A0105, dated June 10, 2016. The service information describes procedures for repetitive LFEC inspections and repairs of the circumferential splice plates at station 900 and station 1180, from stringer S-6L to stringer S-6R, for any cracks. 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.

**Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this AD affects 634 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
LFEC inspection	6 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$510 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$510 per inspection cycle	\$323,340 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):



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**2017-12-12 The Boeing Company:** Amendment 39-18927; Docket No. FAA-2016-9566; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-191-AD.

**(a) Effective Date**

This AD is effective July 25, 2017.

**(b) Affected ADs**

This AD affects AD 2006-11-11, Amendment 39-14615 (71 FR 30278, May 26, 2006) (“AD 2006-11-11”).

**(c) Applicability**

(1) This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 757-200, -200PF, and -200CB series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(2) Installation of Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01518SE ([http://rgl.faa.gov/Regulatory\\_and\\_Guidance\\_Library/rgstc.nsf/0/48e13cdfbbc32cf4862576a4005d308b/\\$FILE/ST01518SE.pdf](http://rgl.faa.gov/Regulatory_and_Guidance_Library/rgstc.nsf/0/48e13cdfbbc32cf4862576a4005d308b/$FILE/ST01518SE.pdf)) does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01518SE is installed, a “change in product” alternative method of compliance (AMOC) approval request is not necessary to comply with the requirements of 14 CFR 39.17.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by an evaluation by the design approval holder (DAH) indicating that the fuselage circumferential splice plates along the center fastener rows, forward and aft of station 900 and station 1180 splice centerlines, are subject to widespread fatigue damage (WFD). We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks of certain circumferential splice plates, which could lead to the failure of a principal structural element and could adversely affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

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

**(g) Repetitive Low Frequency Eddy Current (LFEC) Inspections and Corrective Actions**

At the applicable time specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757-53A0105, dated June 10, 2016, except as required by paragraph (h)(1) of this AD: Do an LFEC inspection for cracking of the circumferential splice plates at station 900 and station 1180,

from stringer S-6L to stringer S-6R, and do all applicable corrective actions, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757-53A0105, dated June 10, 2016, except as required by paragraph (h)(2) of this AD. Do all applicable corrective actions before further flight. Repeat the inspections thereafter at the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757-53A0105, dated June 10, 2016. Accomplishing these inspections terminates the requirements of paragraph (h) of AD 2006-11-11 for the inspections of structurally significant item (SSI) 53-40-05, circumferential skin splice body station BS900 stringer S-6L to stringer S-6R and circumferential skin splice body station BS1180 stringer S-6L to stringer S-6R, as specified in Section 9 of Boeing Maintenance Planning Data (MPD) Document D622N001-9, May 2003 or June 2005 revisions. All other requirements of AD 2006-11-11 remain fully applicable and must be complied with.

#### **(h) Service Information Exceptions**

(1) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757-53A0105, dated June 10, 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) Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757-53A0105, dated June 10, 2016, specifies to contact Boeing for repair instructions, and specifies that action as Required for Compliance (RC), this AD requires 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)(2) of this AD: For service information that contains steps that are labeled as 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. If a step or substep is labeled “RC Exempt,” then the RC requirement is removed from that step or substep. 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 Eric Schrieber, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120L, FAA, Los Angeles ACO, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5348; fax: 562-627-5210; email: eric.schrieber@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 757-53A0105, dated June 10, 2016.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone: 562-797-1717; Internet: <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(4) You may view this 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 June 6, 2017.

Michael Kaszycki,  
Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.