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## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

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

**[Docket No. FAA-2017-0335; Product Identifier 2017-NM-025-AD; Amendment 39-18994; AD 2017-17-04]**

**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 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. This AD was prompted by a report of cracks in the upper aft skin of the right wing at certain fastener holes along the rear spar upper chord. This AD requires repetitive inspections for cracking of the upper aft skin of the wings, and repair if necessary. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

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

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of September 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; telephone 562-797-1717; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 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-2017-0335.

#### **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-2017-0335; 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 final rule, 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:** Payman Soltani, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5313; fax: 562-627-5210; email: payman.soltani@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 Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes. The NPRM published in the Federal Register on May 17, 2017 (82 FR 22619) (“the NPRM”). The NPRM was prompted by a report of cracks in the upper aft skin of the right wing at certain fastener holes along the rear spar upper chord. The NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections for cracking of the upper aft skin of the wings, and repair if necessary.

### **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 Robert Simpson concurred with the content of the NPRM.

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

Aviation Partners Boeing stated that accomplishing the supplemental type certificate (STC) ST01219SE does not affect compliance with the actions specified in the NPRM.

We agree with the commenter. We have redesignated paragraph (c) of the proposed AD as paragraph (c)(1) and added paragraph (c)(2) to this AD to state that installation of STC ST01219SE does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01219SE 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.

### **Conclusion**

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this final rule 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 final rule.

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

We reviewed Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017. This service information describes procedures for repetitive detailed inspections of the upper aft skin of the wings

for cracking. 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 471 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

<b>Estimated Costs</b>				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Labor cost</b>	<b>Parts cost</b>	<b>Cost per product</b>	<b>Cost on U.S. operators</b>
Repetitive inspections	5 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$425 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$425 per inspection cycle	\$200,175 per inspection cycle.

We have received no definitive data that enables 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.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

### 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):



**FAA**  
**Aviation Safety**

## **AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE**

[www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/alerts/](http://www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/alerts/)  
[www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/advanced.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/advanced.html)

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**2017-17-04 The Boeing Company:** Amendment 39-18994; Docket No. FAA-2017-0335; Product Identifier 2017-NM-025-AD.

**(a) Effective Date**

This AD is effective September 25, 2017.

**(b) Affected ADs**

None.

**(c) Applicability**

(1) This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(2) Installation of Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01219SE ([http://rgl.faa.gov/Regulatory\\_and\\_Guidance\\_Library/rgstc.nsf/0/312bc296830a925c86257c85006d1b1f/\\$FILE/ST01219SE.pdf](http://rgl.faa.gov/Regulatory_and_Guidance_Library/rgstc.nsf/0/312bc296830a925c86257c85006d1b1f/$FILE/ST01219SE.pdf)) does not affect the ability to accomplish the actions required by this AD. Therefore, for airplanes on which STC ST01219SE 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 57; Wings.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by a report of cracks in the upper aft skin of the right wing at certain fastener holes along the rear spar upper chord. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracks in the upper aft skin of the wings, which could result in the inability of a principle structural element to sustain limit load, and consequent reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

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

**(g) Group 2 Airplanes: Detailed Inspections and Repair**

For Group 2 airplanes identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017: At the applicable time specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017, except as required by paragraph (i) of this AD, do a detailed inspection for cracking of the upper aft skin of the wings from wing buttock line (WBL) 80 to WBL 155, in accordance with Part 1 of the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service

Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017. If any cracking is found, repair before further flight in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD. Although Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017, specifies to contact Boeing for repair instructions, and specifies that action as “RC” (Required for Compliance), this AD requires repair as specified in this paragraph. Repeat the inspection thereafter at the applicable time specified in paragraph 1.E., “Compliance,” of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017.

**(h) Group 1 Airplanes: Inspection and Corrective Action**

For Group 1 airplanes identified in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017: Within 120 days after the effective date of this AD, inspect for cracking of the upper aft skin of the wings, and do all applicable corrective actions, using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j) of this AD.

**(i) Exception to the Service Information**

Where Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017, 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.

**(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)**

(1) The Manager, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 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 certification office, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) 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 Branch, 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 (g) of this AD: For service information that contains steps that are labeled as Required for Compliance (RC), the provisions of paragraphs (j)(4)(i) and (j)(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.

## **(k) Related Information**

For more information about this AD, contact Payman Soltani, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5313; fax: 562-627-5210; email: [payman.soltani@faa.gov](mailto:payman.soltani@faa.gov).

## **(l) 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 737-57A1332, dated January 3, 2017.

(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; telephone 562-797-1717; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>.

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 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 August 8, 2017.

Dionne Palermo,  
Acting Director, System Oversight Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.