

Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2003–NM–92–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Model Avro 146–RJ Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to all BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Model Avro 146–RJ series airplanes. This proposal would require replacing the existing digital flight guidance computer(s) (DFGC) with a new flight computer(s). This action is necessary to prevent a premature flare due to an erroneous reading by the DFGC(s) occurring at any point on the approach after 1,500 feet plus 10 seconds once category III landing status has been achieved, and subsequent reduced controllability of the airplane. This action is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 23, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003–NM–92–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-nprmcomment@faa.gov. Comments sent via fax or the Internet must contain “Docket No. 2003–NM–92–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 or 2000 or ASCII text.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from British Aerospace Regional Aircraft American Support, 13850 McLearn Road, Herndon, Virginia 20171. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Todd Thompson, Aerospace Engineer; International Branch, ANM–116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056; telephone (425) 227–1175; fax (425) 227–1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed 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 above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this action may be changed in light of the comments received.

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 proposed 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 proposed 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 summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this action must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: “Comments to Docket Number 2003–NM–92–AD.” The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–114, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2003–NM–92–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which is the airworthiness authority for the United Kingdom, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on all BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Model Avro 146–RJ series airplanes. The CAA advises that, due to an erroneous reading by the digital flight guidance computer (DFGC), once category III landing status has been achieved, a premature flare can occur at any point on the approach after 1,500 feet plus 10 seconds. This could cause the pilot to attempt manual compensation and to apply force to the control column while the autopilot is engaged, which can lead to a runaway condition of the autotrim. This condition, if not corrected, could result in a continued lack of awareness by the flight crew of autopilot engagement status and may result in the buildup of considerable stick forces, leading to reduced controllability of the airplane.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

BAE Systems (Operations) Limited has issued Service Bulletin SB.22–068–70628B, dated November 4, 2002, which describes procedures for replacement of the existing digital flight guidance computer(s) (DFGC) with a new DFGC(s). Accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin is intended to adequately address the identified unsafe condition. The CAA classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued British airworthiness directive 001–11–2002 to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes in the United Kingdom.

FAA's Conclusions

This airplane model is manufactured in the United Kingdom and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of section 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the CAA has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the CAA, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other airplanes of the same type design registered in the United States, the proposed AD would require accomplishment of the actions specified in the service bulletin described previously, except as described below.

Difference Between Proposed AD and Service Bulletin

Although the service bulletin referenced in this AD specifies to submit information to the manufacturer, this AD does not include such a requirement.

Cost Impact

The FAA estimates that 36 airplanes of U.S. registry would be affected by this proposed AD, that it would take approximately 1 work hour per airplane to accomplish the proposed actions, and that the average labor rate is \$65 per work hour. Required parts would cost approximately \$4,250 per DFGC (some airplanes may have 2 DFGCs). Based on these figures, the cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be between \$4,315 and \$8,565 per airplane.

The cost impact figure discussed above is based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the proposed requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted. The cost impact figures discussed in AD rulemaking actions represent only the time necessary to perform the specific actions actually required by the AD. These figures typically do not include incidental costs, such as the time required to gain access and close up, planning time, or time necessitated by other administrative actions.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations proposed herein would 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 proposal would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, 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. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 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.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

BAE Systems (Operations) Limited (Formerly British Aerospace Regional Aircraft): Docket 2003-NM-92-AD.

Applicability: All Model Avro 146-RJ series airplanes; certificated in any category.
Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent a premature flare due to an erroneous reading by the DFGC(s) occurring at any point on the approach after 1,500 feet plus 10 seconds once category III landing status has been achieved, and subsequent reduced controllability of the airplane, accomplish the following:

Replacement

(a) Within 29 months after the effective date of this AD, replace the existing digital

flight guidance computer(s) (DFGC) with a new DFGC(s), in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Service Bulletin SB.22-068-70628B, dated November 4, 2002.

Reporting Requirements

(b) Although the service bulletin referenced in paragraph (a) of this AD specifies to submit information to the manufacturer, this AD does not include such a requirement.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(c) In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance for this AD.

Note 1: The subject of this AD is addressed in British airworthiness directive 001-11-2002.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 12, 2004.

Ali Bahrami,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 04-6504 Filed 3-23-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2004-NM-29-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes to revise an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Boeing Model 737-100, -200, -200C, -300, -400, and -500 series airplanes, that currently requires replacing existing screw, nut, and washers that attach the latch cable assembly to the latch block assembly of the door mounted escape slides, with new, improved screw, nut, and washers. The actions specified by that AD are intended to prevent the latch cable assembly from disconnecting from the latch block assembly of the door mounted escape slide, which could result in an escape slide not deploying in an emergency situation. This action would revise the parts installation paragraph to allow certain nuts to be installed and is intended to address the identified unsafe condition.