

new 15-5 stainless steel midspars fittings;

3. Replacing the aft bulkhead assembly and overhaul of the spring beam;

4. Improving the strut-to-wing attachments by replacing the upper link and the diagonal brace;

5. Reworking the rib of wing station (WS)1140; and

6. Modifying the electrical wiring and hydraulics by rerouting certain wire bundles around the new dual side load fitting and installing new hydraulic tubes.

This alert service bulletin specifies that the modification of the nacelle strut and wing structure is to be accomplished prior to, or concurrently with, the terminating actions described in the service bulletins listed in paragraph I.C., Table 2, "Prior or Concurrent Service Bulletins," on page 7 of this alert service bulletin. These terminating actions include the following:

1. Replacement of the diagonal brace, midspars, and upper link fuse pins with new third generation 15-5 corrosion resistant steel fuse pins;

2. Inspection and replacement of the bearings on the lower spar fitting of the outboard engine strut with new bearings;

3. Installation of improved bushings in the strut-to-wing attach fittings; and

4. Inspection and rework of improperly torqued fasteners.

Paragraph III, NOTES 8, 9, 10, and 11 of the Accomplishment Instructions on page 91 of the alert service bulletin also describe procedures for inspections and checks to detect discrepancies of the adjacent structure, and correction of any discrepancies.

Explanation of the Provisions of the Proposed AD

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other products of this same type design, the proposed AD would require modification of the nacelle strut and wing structure, inspections and

checks to detect discrepancies in the adjacent structure, and correction of discrepancies. The actions would be required to be accomplished in accordance with the alert service bulletin described previously.

The FAA has determined that long term continued operational safety will be better assured by design changes to remove the source of the problem, rather than by repetitive inspections. Long term inspections may not be providing the degree of safety assurance necessary for the transport airplane fleet. This, coupled with a better understanding of the human factors associated with numerous continual inspections, has led the FAA to consider placing less emphasis on inspections and more emphasis on design improvements. The proposed modification requirement is in consonance with these considerations.

Accomplishment of the modification of the nacelle strut and wing structure would terminate the inspections currently required by the following AD's:

AD No.	Amend- ment No.	Federal Register citation	Date of publication
93-17-07	39-8678	58 FR 45827	Aug. 31, 1993.
93-03-14	39-8518	58 FR 14513	Mar. 18, 1993.
92-24-51	39-8439	57 FR 60118	Dec. 18, 1992.

As a result of recent communications with the Air Transport Association (ATA) of America, the FAA has learned that, in general, some operators may misunderstand the legal effect of AD's on airplanes that are identified in the applicability provision of the AD, but that have been altered or repaired in the area addressed by the AD. The FAA points out that all airplanes identified in the applicability provision of an AD are legally subject to the AD. If an airplane has been altered or repaired in the affected area in such a way as to affect compliance with the AD, the owner or operator is required to obtain FAA approval for an alternative method of compliance with the AD, in accordance with the paragraph of each AD that provides for such approvals. A note has been included in this notice to clarify this requirement.

Cost Estimate

There are approximately 257 Model 747 series airplanes equipped with General Electric Model CF6-80C2 series engines or Pratt & Whitney Model PW4000 series engines of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 36 airplanes of U.S.

registry would be affected by this proposed AD.

The proposed modification would take approximately 6,253 work hours per airplane to accomplish, at an average labor cost of \$60 per work hour. The manufacturer would incur the cost of labor, on a prorated basis, with 20 years being the expected life of these airplanes. The total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is based on the median age for the fleet of Model 747 series airplanes equipped with General Electric Model CF6-80C2 series engines or Pratt & Whitney Model PW4000 series engines, which is estimated to be 5 years. Required parts would be supplied by the manufacturer at no cost to the operators. Based on these figures, the total cost impact of the proposed AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be \$3,376,620, or \$93,795 per airplane.

This cost impact figure does not reflect the cost of the terminating actions described in the service bulletins listed in paragraph I.C., Table 2, "Prior or Concurrent Service Bulletins," on page 7 of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 747-54A2156, dated December 15, 1994, that are proposed to be accomplished prior to, or

concurrently with, the modification of the nacelle strut and wing structure. Since some operators may have accomplished certain modifications on some or all of the airplanes in its fleet, while other operators may not have accomplished any of the modifications on any of the airplanes in its fleet, the FAA is unable to provide a reasonable estimate of the cost of accomplishing the terminating actions described in the service bulletins listed in Table 2 of the Boeing alert service bulletin. As indicated earlier in this preamble, the FAA invites comments specifically on the overall economic aspects of this proposed rule. Any data received via public comments to this notice will aid the FAA in developing an accurate accounting of the cost impact of the rule.

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 FAA recognizes that the obligation to maintain aircraft in an airworthy condition is vital, but sometimes excessive. Because AD's