used, there must be a landing gear position indicator easily visible to the pilot or to the appropriate crew members (as well as necessary devices to actuate the indicator) to indicate without ambiguity that the retractable units and their associated doors are secured in the extended (or retracted) position. The means must be designed as follows:

* * * * *

(5) The system used to generate the aural warning must be designed to minimize false or inappropriate alerts.

* * * * *

(7) A flightcrew alert must be provided whenever the landing gear position is not consistent with the landing gear selector lever position.

(f) *Protection of equipment on landing gear and in wheel wells.* Equipment that is essential to the safe operation of the airplane and that is located on the landing gear and in wheel wells must be protected from the damaging effects of—

(1) A bursting tire;

* * * * *

(3) Possible wheel brake temperatures.

■ 3. Amend § 25.773 by revising paragraph (b)(2) and adding paragraphs (b)(3) and (4) to read as follows:

§ 25.773 Pilot compartment view.

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(2) No single failure of the systems used to provide the view required by paragraph (b)(1) of this section must cause the loss of that view by both pilots in the specified precipitation conditions.

(3) The first pilot must have a window that—

(i) Is openable under the conditions prescribed in paragraph (b)(1) of this section when the cabin is not pressurized;

(ii) Provides the view specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section; and

(iii) Provides sufficient protection from the elements against impairment of the pilot's vision.

(4) The openable window specified in paragraph (b)(3) of this section need not be provided if it is shown that an area of the transparent surface will remain clear sufficient for at least one pilot to land the airplane safely in the event of—

(i) Any system failure or combination of failures which is not extremely improbable, in accordance with § 25.1309, under the precipitation conditions specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section.

(ii) An encounter with severe hail, birds, or insects.

* * * * *

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 27, 2011.

Michael P. Huerta,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2012–360 Filed 1–10–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 25

[Docket No. FAA–2012–0009; Special Conditions No. 25–454–SC]

Special Conditions: The Boeing Company, Model 767–300; Seats With Inflatable Lapbelts

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final special conditions; request for comments.

SUMMARY: These special conditions are issued for the Boeing Model 767–300 series airplanes. These airplanes will have a novel or unusual design feature associated with seats with inflatable lapbelts. The applicable airworthiness regulations do not contain adequate or appropriate safety standards for this design feature. These special conditions contain the additional safety standards that the Administrator considers necessary to establish a level of safety equivalent to that established by the existing airworthiness standards.

DATES: The effective date of these special conditions is January 5, 2012. We must receive your comments by February 27, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Send comments identified by docket number FAA–2012–0009 using any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRegulations Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov/* and follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- *Mail:* Send comments to Docket Operations, M–30, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Room W12–140, West Building Ground Floor, Washington, DC 20590–0001.
- *Hand Delivery or Courier:* Take comments to Docket Operations in Room W12–140 of the West Building Ground Floor at 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
- *Fax:* Fax comments to Docket Operations at (202) 493–2251.

Privacy: The FAA will post all comments it receives, without change, to *http://www.regulations.gov/*, including any personal information the commenter provides. Using the search function of the docket Web site, anyone can find and read the electronic form of all comments received into any FAA docket, including the name of the individual sending the comment (or signing the comment for an association, business, labor union, etc.). DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement can be found in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477–19478), as well as at *http://DocketsInfo.dot.gov/*.

Docket: Background documents or comments received may be read at *http://www.regulations.gov/* at any time. Follow the online instructions for accessing the docket or go to the Docket Operations in Room W12–140 of the West Building Ground Floor at 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Shelden, FAA, Airframe and Cabin Safety Branch, ANM–115, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057–3356; telephone (425) 227–2785; facsimile (425) 227–1320.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA has determined that notice of, and opportunity for prior public comment on, these special conditions are impracticable because these procedures would significantly delay issuance of the design approval and thus delivery of the affected aircraft. In addition, the substance of these special conditions has been subject to the public comment process in several prior instances with no substantive comments received. The FAA therefore finds that good cause exists for making these special conditions effective upon issuance.

Comments Invited

We invite interested people to take part in this rulemaking by sending written comments, data, or views. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the special conditions, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data.

We will consider all comments we receive by the closing date for comments. We may change these special conditions based on the comments we receive.

Background

On April 19, 2011, The Boeing Company (hereafter referred to as ''Boeing'') applied for a change to Type Certificate No. A1NM for the installation of inflatable lapbelts on

Boeing Model 767–300 series airplanes. The Model 767–300 is a transport category airplane powered by two turbofan engines with a maximum passenger capacity of 290 and a maximum takeoff weight of 351,600 pounds. These special conditions are to allow installation of inflatable lapbelts for head injury protection on certain seats in the 767–300 series airplanes similar to Special Conditions No. 25–187A–SC for Boeing Model 777 series airplanes and Special Conditions No. 25–386–SC for Boeing Model 737 series airplanes.

The inflatable lapbelt is designed to limit occupant forward excursion in the event of an accident. This will reduce the potential for head injury, thereby reducing the head injury criteria (HIC) measurement. The inflatable lapbelt behaves similarly to an automotive inflatable airbag, but in this case the airbag is integrated into the lapbelt and inflates away from the seated occupant. While inflatable airbags are now standard in the automotive industry, the use of an inflatable lapbelt is novel for commercial aviation.

Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) 121.311(j) requires that all passenger and flight attendant seats in transport category airplanes meet the requirements of § 25.562 in effect on or after June 16, 1988, if they were type certificated after January 1, 1958, manufactured on or after October 27, 2009, and operated under part 121 rules in passenger-carrying operations.

Boeing is required to show compliance with certain aspects of § 25.562 as specified per Type Certificate Data Sheet (TCDS) A1NM for the Model 767–300 (hereafter referred to as ''767–300'') series airplanes. However, 767–300 series airplanes manufactured on or after October 27, 2009, operated under part 121, must meet all of the requirements of § 25.562 for passenger and flight attendant seats. Thus, it is in the interest of installers to show full compliance to § 25.562, so that an operator under part 121 may be able to use the aircraft without having to do additional certification work. It is also noted that some foreign civil airworthiness authorities have invoked these same operator requirements in the form of airworthiness directives.

Section 25.785 requires that occupants be protected from head injury by either the elimination of any injurious object within the striking radius of the head, or by padding. Traditionally, this has required a set back of 35 inches from any bulkhead or other rigid interior feature or, where not practical, specified types of padding. The relative effectiveness of these means of injury protection was not quantified. With the adoption of Amendment 25–64 to 14 CFR part 25, specifically § 25.562, a new standard that quantifies required head injury protection was created.

Section 25.562 specifies that each seat type design approved for crew or passenger occupancy during takeoff and landing must be shown to be compliant by successful completion of dynamic tests or by rational analysis based on dynamic tests of a similar type seat. In particular, the regulations require that persons not suffer serious head injury under the conditions specified in the tests, and that protection must be provided, or the seat be designed, so that the head impact does not exceed a HIC of 1000 units. While the test conditions described for HIC are detailed and specific, it is the intent of the requirement that an adequate level of head injury protection be provided for passengers in a severe crash.

Because §§ 25.562 and 25.785 and associated guidance do not adequately address seats with inflatable lapbelts, the FAA recognizes that appropriate pass/fail criteria need to be developed that do fully address the safety concerns specific to occupants of these seats.

Type Certification Basis

Under the provisions of § 21.101, Boeing must show that the 767–300, as changed, continues to meet the applicable provisions of the regulations incorporated by reference in Type Certificate No. A1NM or the applicable regulations in effect on the date of application for the change. The regulations incorporated by reference in the type certificate are commonly referred to as the ''original type certification basis.'' The regulations incorporated by reference in Type Certificate No. A1NM are as follows: part 25 of the Federal Aviation Regulations as amended by Amendments 25–1 through 25–37, except where superseded. The U.S. type certification basis for the 767–300 is established in accordance with 14 CFR 21.29 and 21.17 and the type certification application date. The U.S. type certification basis is listed in TCDS No. A1NM.

If the Administrator finds that the applicable airworthiness regulations (i.e., 14 CFR part 25) do not contain adequate or appropriate safety standards for the Boeing Model 767–300 because of a novel or unusual design feature, special conditions are prescribed under the provisions of § 21.16.

Special conditions are initially applicable to the model for which they are issued. Should the type certificate for that model be amended later to include any other model that incorporates the same novel or unusual design feature, or should any other model already included on the same type certificate be modified to incorporate the same novel or unusual design feature, the special conditions would also apply to the other model.

In addition to the applicable airworthiness regulations and special conditions, the 767–300 must comply with the fuel vent and exhaust emission requirements of 14 CFR part 34 and the noise certification requirements of 14 CFR part 36.

The FAA issues special conditions, as defined in 14 CFR 11.19, in accordance with § 11.38, and they become part of the type-certification basis under § 21.101.

Novel or Unusual Design Features

The 767–300 will incorporate the following novel or unusual design features: Boeing is proposing to install an inflatable lapbelt on certain seats of the 767–300 series airplanes in order to reduce the potential for head injury in the event of an accident. The inflatable lapbelt works similarly to an automotive airbag, except that the airbag is integrated with the lapbelt of the restraint system.

The CFR states the performance criteria for head injury protection in objective terms. However, none of these criteria are adequate to address the specific issues raised concerning seats with inflatable lapbelts. The FAA has therefore determined that, in addition to the requirements of 14 CFR part 25, special conditions are needed to address requirements particular to installation of seats with inflatable lapbelts.

Accordingly, in addition to the passenger injury criteria specified in § 25.785, these special conditions are proposed for the Boeing Model 767–300 series airplanes equipped with inflatable lapbelts. Other conditions may be developed, as needed, based on further FAA review and discussions with the manufacturer and civil aviation authorities.

Discussion

From the standpoint of a passenger safety system, the inflatable lapbelt is unique in that it is both an active and entirely autonomous device. While the automotive industry has good experience with inflatable airbags, the conditions of use and reliance on the inflatable lapbelt as the sole means of injury protection are quite different. In automobile installations, the airbag is a supplemental system and works in conjunction with an upper torso restraint. In addition, the crash event is

more definable and of typically shorter duration, which can simplify the activation logic. The airplane operating environment is also quite different from automobiles and includes the potential for greater wear and tear and unanticipated abuse conditions (due to galley loading, passenger baggage, etc.); airplanes also operate where exposure to high intensity electromagnetic fields could affect the activation system.

The inflatable lapbelt has two potential advantages over other means of head impact protection. First, it can provide significantly greater protection than would be expected with energy-absorbing pads, and second, it can provide essentially equivalent protection for occupants of all stature. These are significant advantages from a safety standpoint, since such devices will likely provide a level of safety that exceeds the minimum standards of the Federal aviation regulations. Conversely, inflatable lapbelts in general are active systems and must be relied upon to activate properly when needed, as opposed to an energy-absorbing pad or upper torso restraint that is passive, and always available. Therefore, the potential advantages must be balanced against these and other potential disadvantages in order to develop standards for this design feature.

The FAA has considered the installation of inflatable lapbelts to have two primary safety concerns: First, that they perform properly under foreseeable operating conditions, and second, that they do not perform in a manner or at such times as would constitute a hazard to the airplane or occupants. This latter point has the potential to be the more rigorous of the requirements, owing to the active nature of the system.

The inflatable lapbelt will rely on electronic sensors for signaling and pyrotechnic charges for activation so that it is available when needed. These same devices could be susceptible to inadvertent activation, causing deployment in a potentially unsafe manner. The consequences of such deployment, as well as failure to deploy, must be considered in establishing the reliability of the system. Boeing must substantiate that the effects of an inadvertent deployment in flight are either not a hazard to the airplane, or that such deployment is an extremely improbable occurrence (less than 10^{-9} per flight hour). The effect of an inadvertent deployment on a passenger or crewmember that might be positioned close to the inflatable lapbelt should also be considered. The person could be either standing or sitting. A minimum reliability level will have to be established for this case, depending upon the consequences, even if the effect on the airplane is negligible.

The potential for an inadvertent deployment could be increased as a result of conditions in service. The installation must take into account wear and tear so that the likelihood of an inadvertent deployment is not increased to an unacceptable level. In this context, an appropriate inspection interval and self-test capability are considered necessary. Other outside influences are lightning and high intensity radiated fields (HIRF). Existing regulations regarding lightning, § 25.1316, and existing HIRF special conditions for the 767–300 series airplanes, Special Conditions No. 25–ANM–18, are applicable. For the purposes of compliance with those conditions, if inadvertent deployment could cause a hazard to the airplane, the inflatable lapbelt is considered a critical system; if inadvertent deployment could cause injuries to persons, the inflatable lapbelt should be considered an essential system. Finally, the inflatable lapbelt installation should be protected from the effects of fire, so that an additional hazard is not created by, for example, a rupture of the pyrotechnic squib.

In order to be an effective safety system, the inflatable lapbelt must function properly and must not introduce any additional hazards to occupants as a result of its functioning. There are several areas where the inflatable lapbelt differs from traditional occupant protection systems and requires special conditions to ensure adequate performance.

Because the inflatable lapbelt is essentially a single use device, there is the potential that it could deploy under crash conditions that are not sufficiently severe as to require head injury protection from the inflatable lapbelt. Since an actual crash is frequently composed of a series of impacts before the airplane comes to rest, this could render the inflatable lapbelt useless if a larger impact follows the initial impact. This situation does not exist with energy absorbing pads or upper torso restraints, which tend to provide continuous protection regardless of severity or number of impacts in a crash event. Therefore, the inflatable lapbelt installation should be such that the inflatable lapbelt will provide protection when it is required, by not expending its protection during a less severe impact. Also, it is possible to have several large impact events during the course of a crash, but there will be no requirement for the inflatable lapbelt to provide protection for multiple impacts.

Since each occupant's restraint system provides protection for that occupant only, the installation must address seats that are unoccupied. It will be necessary to show that the required protection is provided for each occupant regardless of the number of occupied seats, and considering that unoccupied seats may have lapbelts that are active.

The inflatable lap belt should be effective for a wide range of occupants. The FAA has historically considered the range from the fifth percentile female to the ninety-fifth percentile male as the range of occupants that must be taken into account. In this case, the FAA is proposing consideration of a broader range of occupants, due to the nature of the lapbelt installation and its close proximity to the occupant. In a similar vein, these persons could have assumed the brace position for those accidents where an impact is anticipated. Test data indicate that occupants in the brace position do not require supplemental protection, and so it would not be necessary to show that the inflatable lapbelt will enhance the brace position. However, the inflatable lapbelt must not introduce a hazard in that case when deploying into the seated, braced occupant.

Another area of concern is the use of seats, so equipped, by children whether lap-held, in approved child safety seats, or occupying the seat directly. Although specifically prohibited by the FAA operating regulations, the use of the supplementary loop belt (''belly belt'') may be required by other civil aviation authorities, and should also be considered with the end goal of meeting those regulations. Similarly, if the seat is occupied by a pregnant woman, the installation needs to address such usage, either by demonstrating that it will function properly, or by adding appropriate limitation on usage.

Since the inflatable lapbelt will be electrically powered, there is the possibility that the system could fail due to a separation in the fuselage. Since this system is intended as crash/post-crash protection means, failure due to fuselage separation is not acceptable. As with emergency lighting, the system should function properly if such a separation occurs at any point in the fuselage.

Since the inflatable lapbelt is likely to have a large volume displacement, the inflated bag could potentially impede egress of passengers. Since the bag deflates to absorb energy, it is likely that an inflatable lapbelt would be deflated at the time that persons would be trying to leave their seats. Nonetheless, it is considered appropriate to specify a time

interval after which the inflatable lapbelt may not impede rapid egress. Ten seconds has been chosen as a reasonable time since this corresponds to the maximum time allowed for an exit to be openable (§ 25.809). In actuality, it is unlikely that an exit would be prepared by a flight attendant this quickly in an accident severe enough to warrant deployment of the inflatable lapbelt, and the inflatable lapbelt will likely deflate much quicker than ten seconds.

This potential impediment to rapid egress is even more critical at the seats installed in the emergency exit rows. Section 25.813 requires access to the exit from the main aisle in the form of an unobstructed passageway and no interference in opening the exit. The restraint system must not create an impediment to the access to, and the opening of, the exit. In some cases, the passenger is the one who will open the exit, such as a Type III over wing hatch. These lapbelts should be evaluated in the exit row under existing regulations (§§ 25.809 and 25.813) and guidance material. The inflatable lapbelts must also be evaluated in post crash conditions and should be evaluated using representative restraint systems in the bag-deployed condition. This evaluation would include reviewing the access to and opening of the exit, specifically for obstructions in the egress path and any interferences in opening the exit. Each unique interior configuration must be considered, for example, passageway width, single or dual passageways with outboard seat removed, etc. If the restraint creates any obstruction or interference, it is likely that it could impede the rapid egress of the airplane. Project-specific guidance is likely necessary if these restraint systems are installed at exit door rows.

The current special conditions for the Boeing 777 series airplanes, Special Conditions No. 25–187A–SC, were amended to address flammability of the airbag material. During the development of the inflatable lapbelt, the manufacturer was unable to develop a fabric that would meet the inflation requirements for the bag and the flammability requirements of part I, paragraph (a)(1)(ii), of appendix F to part 25. The fabrics that were developed that met the flammability requirement did not produce acceptable deployment characteristics. However, the manufacturer was able to develop a fabric that meets the less stringent flammability requirements of part I, paragraph (a)(1)(iv), of appendix F to part 25 and has acceptable deployment characteristics.

Part I of appendix F to part 25 specifies the flammability requirements for interior materials and components. There is no reference to inflatable restraint systems in appendix F, because such devices did not exist at the time the flammability requirements were written. The existing requirements are based on both material types, as well as use, and have been specified in light of the state-of-the-art of materials available to perform a given function. In the absence of a specific reference, the default requirement would be for the type of material used to construct the inflatable restraint, which is a fabric in this case. However, in writing special conditions, the FAA must also consider the use of the material, and whether the default requirement is appropriate. In this case, the specialized function of the inflatable restraint means that highly specialized materials are needed. The standard normally applied to fabrics is a 12-second vertical ignition test. However, materials that meet this standard do not perform adequately as inflatable restraints. Since the safety benefit of the inflatable restraint is very significant, the flammability standard appropriate for these devices should not screen out suitable materials, thereby effectively eliminating use of inflatable restraints. The FAA will need to establish a balance between the safety benefit of the inflatable restraint and its flammability performance. At this time, the 2.5-inch per minute horizontal test is considered to provide that balance. As the state-of-the-art in materials progresses (which is expected), the FAA may change this standard in subsequent special conditions to account for improved materials.

The following special conditions can be characterized as addressing either the safety performance of the system or the system's integrity against inadvertent activation. Because a crash requiring use of the inflatable lapbelts is a relatively rare event, and because the consequences of an inadvertent activation are potentially quite severe, these latter requirements are probably the more rigorous from a design standpoint.

Finally, it should be noted that the special conditions are applicable to the inflatable lapbelt system as installed. The special conditions are not an installation approval. Therefore, while the special conditions relate to each such system installed, the overall installation approval is a separate finding and must consider the combined effects of all such systems installed.

Applicability

As discussed above, these special conditions are applicable to the 767–300. Should Boeing apply at a later date for a change to the type certificate to include another model incorporating the same novel or unusual design feature, the special conditions would apply to that model as well.

Conclusion

This action affects only certain novel or unusual design features on one model of airplanes. It is not a rule of general applicability.

The substance of these special conditions has been subjected to the notice and comment period in several prior instances and has been derived without substantive change from those previously issued. It is unlikely that prior public comment would result in a significant change from the substance contained herein. Therefore, because a delay would significantly affect the certification of the airplane, which is imminent, the FAA has determined that prior public notice and comment are unnecessary and impracticable, and good cause exists for adopting these special conditions upon issuance. The FAA is requesting comments to allow interested persons to submit views that may not have been submitted in response to the prior opportunities for comment described above.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 25

Aircraft, Aviation safety, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

The authority citation for these special conditions is as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701, 44702, 44704.

The Special Conditions

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the following special conditions are issued as part of the type certification basis for Boeing Model 767–300 airplanes.

1. Seats with Inflatable Lapbelts. It must be shown that the inflatable lapbelt will deploy and provide protection under crash conditions where it is necessary to prevent serious head injury. The means of protection must take into consideration a range of stature from a two-year-old child to a ninety-fifth percentile male. The inflatable lapbelt must provide a consistent approach to energy absorption throughout that range of occupants. In addition, the following situations must be considered:

a. The seat occupant is holding an infant.

b. The seat occupant is a child in a child restraint device.

c. The seat occupant is a child not using a child restraint device.

d. The seat occupant is a pregnant woman.

2. The inflatable lapbelt must provide adequate protection for each occupant regardless of the number of occupants of the seat assembly, considering that unoccupied seats may have active seatbelts.

3. The design must prevent the inflatable lapbelt from being either incorrectly buckled or incorrectly installed such that the inflatable lapbelt would not properly deploy. Alternatively, it must be shown that such deployment is not hazardous to the occupant and will provide the required head injury protection.

4. It must be shown that the inflatable lapbelt system is not susceptible to inadvertent deployment as a result of wear and tear or inertial loads resulting from in-flight or ground maneuvers (including gusts and hard landings) likely to be experienced in service.

5. Deployment of the inflatable lapbelt must not introduce injury mechanisms to the seated occupant or result in injuries that could impede rapid egress. This assessment should include an occupant who is in the brace position when it deploys and an occupant whose belt is loosely fastened.

6. It must be shown that inadvertent deployment of the inflatable lapbelt, during the most critical part of the flight, will either not cause a hazard to the airplane or its occupants, or meets the requirements of § 25.1309(b).

7. It must be shown that the inflatable lapbelt will not impede rapid egress of occupants 10 seconds after its deployment.

8. The system must be protected from lightning and HIRF. The threats specified in existing regulations regarding lightning, § 25.1316, and existing HIRF special conditions for the Boeing Model 767 series aircraft, Special Conditions No. 25–ANM–18, are incorporated by reference for the purpose of measuring lightning and HIRF protection. For the purposes of complying with HIRF requirements, the inflatable lapbelt system is considered a ''critical system'' if its deployment could have a hazardous effect on the airplane; otherwise, it is considered an ''essential'' system.

9. Inflatable lapbelts, once deployed, must not adversely affect the emergency lighting system (i.e., block proximity lights to the extent that the lights no longer meet their intended function).

10. The inflatable lapbelt must function properly after loss of normal aircraft electrical power and after a transverse separation of the fuselage at the most critical location. A separation at the location of the lapbelt does not have to be considered.

11. It must be shown that the inflatable lapbelt will not release hazardous quantities of gas or particulate matter into the cabin.

12. The inflatable lapbelt installation must be protected from the effects of fire such that no hazard to occupants will result.

13. There must be a means for a crewmember to verify the integrity of the inflatable lapbelt activation system prior to each flight, or it must be demonstrated to operate reliably between inspection intervals. The FAA considers the loss of the airbag system deployment function alone (i.e., independent of the conditional event that requires the airbag system deployment) to be a major failure condition.

14. The inflatable material may not have an average burn rate of greater than 2.5 inches/minute when tested using the horizontal flammability test as defined in 14 CFR part 25, appendix F, part I, paragraph (b)(5).

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 5, 2012.

Ali Bahrami,

Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service, ANM–100.

[FR Doc. 2012–350 Filed 1–10–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2011–1139; Directorate Identifier 2011–CE–021–AD; Amendment 39–16911; AD 2011–27–09]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Socata Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Socata Model TBM 700 airplanes. This AD results from mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by an aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI describes the unsafe condition as installation of the wrong (switched) aileron control cables in the wing. This unsafe condition could lead to restricted movement of the aileron, resulting in reduced control of the airplane. We are issuing this AD to require actions to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective February 15, 2012.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the AD as of February 15, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* or in person at 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 service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Socata—Direction des Services—65921 Tarbes Cedex 9—France; telephone +33 (0) 62 41 7300, fax +33 (0) 62 41 76 54, or for North America: Socata North America, 7501 South Airport Road, North Perry Airport (HWO), Pembroke Pines, Florida 33023; telephone: (954) 893–1400; fax: (954) 964–4141; email: *mysocata@socata.daher.com;* Internet: *http://mysocata.com.* You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (816) 329–4148.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Albert Mercado, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329–4119; fax: (816) 329–4090; email: *albert.mercado@faa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an AD that would apply to the specified products. That NPRM was published in the **Federal Register** on October 21, 2011 (76 FR 65419). That NPRM proposed to correct an unsafe condition for the specified products. The MCAI states:

> A TBM 700 operator reported a case of inverted installation of aileron control cables in the wing. The shortest cable was found installed instead of the longest one on wing tip side, with left hand (LH) threaded end in upper section. This wrong installation could have been caused by mistaken maintenance data.
>
> This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to restricted movement