

November 2, 2011), the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

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 AD:

2012-02-18 DASSAULT AVIATION:
Amendment 39-16941. Docket No. FAA-2011-1166; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-169-AD.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) becomes effective April 4, 2012.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to DASSAULT AVIATION Model MYSTERE-FALCON 50 airplanes, all serial numbers, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57: Wings.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by reports of cracking of the flap tracks. We are issuing this AD to prevent cracking of the flap tracks, which could lead to flap asymmetry and loss of control of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

(g) Actions

Within 30 days after the effective date of the AD, revise the maintenance program to include "Non-Destructive Check of Flap Tracks 2 and 5," Maintenance Procedure 57-607, of Chapter 5-40, "Airworthiness Limitations," of the Dassault Falcon 50/50EX Maintenance Manual, Revision 21, dated June 2011. The initial compliance time for doing the check is prior to the accumulation of 7,900 total flight cycles or within 600

flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later.

(h) No Alternative Actions or Intervals

After accomplishing the revision required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (e.g., inspections) or intervals may be used unless the actions or intervals are approved as an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i)(1) of this AD.

(i) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, 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 International Branch, send it to ATTN: Tom Rodriguez, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; phone: 425-227-1137; fax: 425-227-1149. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. 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. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) *Airworthy Product:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

(j) Related Information

Refer to MCAI European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Airworthiness Directive 2010-0080, dated April 29, 2010; and "Non-Destructive Check of Flap Tracks 2 and 5," Maintenance Procedure 57-607, of Chapter 5-40, "Airworthiness Limitations," of the Dassault Falcon 50/50EX Maintenance Manual, Revision 21, dated June 2011; for related information.

(k) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) You must use the following service information to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51 of the following service information.

(i) "Non-Destructive Check of Flap Tracks 2 and 5," Maintenance Procedure 57-607, of Chapter 5-40, "Airworthiness Limitations," of the Dassault Falcon 50/50EX Maintenance Manual, Revision 21, dated June 2011.

(A) Only the title page of Chapter 5-40 specifies the revision level of 21, dated June

2011; the remaining pages show only the revision date of June 2011.

(B) The pages of the maintenance procedure show a revision date of January 2009.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Dassault Falcon Jet, P.O. Box 2000, South Hackensack, New Jersey 07606; telephone 201-440-6700; Internet <http://www.dassaultfalcon.com>.

(3) You may review copies of the service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

(4) You may also review copies of the service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at an NARA facility, call 202-741-6030, or go to http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 26, 2012.

Kalene C. Yanamura,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-3908 Filed 2-28-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2011-1067; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-034-AD; Amendment 39-16944; AD 2012-03-03]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes

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

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Fokker Services B.V. Model F.27 Mark 050 and F.28 Mark 0070 and 0100 airplanes. This AD was prompted by reports that the brightness of the tritium exit signs and lighting strips deteriorated below accepted levels. This AD requires a detailed inspection of tritium exit signs and emergency lighting strips, and replacement if necessary. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct insufficient brightness of the tritium exit signs and lighting strips, which could lead to an unsafe evacuation during an emergency, possibly resulting in injury to occupants.

DATES: This AD becomes effective April 4, 2012.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in this AD as of April 4, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> or in person at the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Rodriguez, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM–116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057–3356; telephone (425) 227–1137; fax (425) 227–1149.

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 11, 2011 (76 FR 62658). That NPRM proposed to correct an unsafe condition for the specified products. The MCAI states:

As required by current certification standards, each transport aeroplane has passenger compartment exit signs and emergency lighting strips installed to locate the emergency exits. A number of these strips and signs are not electrically powered, but are self illuminated by means of a hydrogen isotope, known as Tritium. As this isotope decays over time, these signs will [lose] their brightness.

To remain compliant with regulations, Tritium exit signs and lighting strips should be replaced when their brightness has deteriorated below accepted levels. Currently, the Maintenance Review Board (MRB) Maintenance Planning Document does not include an inspection task for signs and strips containing Tritium.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could result in insufficiently bright exit signs and lighting strips, preventing safe evacuation during an emergency, possibly resulting in injury to occupants.

To correct this unsafe condition, EASA issued AD 2010–0200, which required [a detailed visual] inspection of the brightness of all Tritium exit signs and strips and, depending on findings, replacement of insufficiently bright signs and lighting strips.

Following the issuance of [EASA] AD 2010–0200, Fokker Services discovered that one Service Bulletin (SB), SBF100–33–023, contained errors in the two groups of aeroplane serial numbers and, consequently, in the related instructions for those aeroplanes in that SB.

For the reasons discussed above, this new [EASA] AD retains the requirements of EASA

AD 2010–0200, which is superseded, amends the Applicability and refers to Revision 1 of SBF100–33–023 for the accomplishment instructions.

Note: The MRB document will be updated before July 2011 to include an appropriate maintenance task to ensure that the Tritium exit signs and lighting strips meet the minimum brightness requirements.

You may obtain further information by examining the MCAI in the AD docket.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We considered the comment received. The commenter supports the NPRM (76 FR 62658, October 11, 2011).

Additional Change Made to This Final Rule

We have revised the heading for and wording in paragraph (i) of this AD; this change has not changed the intent of that paragraph.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the 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 (76 FR 62658, October 11, 2011) for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM (76 FR 62658, October 11, 2011).

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD will affect 4 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it will take about 1 work-hour per product to comply with the basic requirements of this AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of this AD to the U.S. operators to be \$340, or \$85 per product.

In addition, we estimate that any necessary follow-on actions would take about 2 work-hours and require parts costing \$833, for a cost of \$1,003 per product. We have no way of determining the number of products that may need these actions.

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

We determined that 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 this AD:

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. 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.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this AD and placed it in the AD docket.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains the NPRM (76 FR 62658, October 11, 2011), the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647–5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

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 AD:

2012–03–03 Fokker Services B.V.:

Amendment 39–16944. Docket No. FAA–2011–1067; Directorate Identifier 2011–NM–034–AD.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) becomes effective April 4, 2012.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Fokker Services B.V. Model airplanes identified in paragraphs (c)(1), (c)(2), and (c)(3) of this AD, certificated in any category.

(1) F.27 Mark 050 airplanes having serial numbers (S/Ns): 20104, 20105, 20121 through 20123 inclusive, 20130 through 20135 inclusive, 20141 through 20145 inclusive, 20150, 20156 through 20176 inclusive, 20178 through 20180 inclusive, 20182 through 20199 inclusive, 20202, 20204 through 20207 inclusive, 20210, 20211, 20213 through 20252 inclusive, 20254 through 20266 inclusive, 20270 through 20279 inclusive, 20281, 20283 through 20288 inclusive, 20296 through 20303 inclusive, 20306, 20307, 20312, 20313, 20316, 20317, 20328, 20331, 20333, and 20335.

(2) F.28 Mark 0070 and 0100 airplanes having S/Ns: 11257, 11258, 11262, 11264 through 11266 inclusive, 11287, 11301, 11317, 11340, 11342, 11352 through 11356 inclusive, 11360, 11368 through 11370 inclusive, 11376, 11377, 11385, 11395, 11402, 11403, 11405 through 11408 inclusive, 11411 through 11419 inclusive, 11425 through 11428 inclusive, 11434 through 11437 inclusive, 11447 through 11449 inclusive, 11457 through 11459 inclusive, 11467, 11469, 11478, 11479, 11481, 11482, 11487, 11492 through 11495 inclusive, 11497, 11498, 11501, 11503, 11506, 11507, 11509, 11514, 11521, 11528, 11529, 11532, 11536 through 11541 inclusive, 11543, 11545, 11547, 11549, 11551, 11553 through 11583 inclusive, and 11585.

(3) F.28 Mark 0100 airplanes, if in a post-Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100–52–060 configuration, having S/Ns: 11244 through 11256 inclusive, 11259 through 11261 inclusive, 11263, 11267 through 11286 inclusive, 11288 through 11300 inclusive, 11302 through 11316 inclusive, 11318 through 11339 inclusive, 11341, 11343 through 11351 inclusive, 11357 through 11367 inclusive, 11371 through 11375 inclusive, 11378 through 11384 inclusive, 11386 through 11394 inclusive, 11396

through 11401 inclusive, 11404, 11409, 11410, 11420 through 11424 inclusive, 11429 through 11433 inclusive, 11438 through 11446 inclusive, 11450 through 11456 inclusive, 11460 through 11466 inclusive, 11468, 11470 through 11477 inclusive, 11480, 11483 through 11486 inclusive, 11488 through 11491 inclusive, 11496, 11499, 11500, 11502, 11504, 11505, 11508, 11510 through 11513 inclusive, 11515 through 11520 inclusive, 11522, 11523, and 11527.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 33: Lights.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by reports that the brightness of the tritium exit signs and lighting strips deteriorated below accepted levels. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct insufficient brightness of the tritium exit signs and lighting strips, which could lead to an unsafe evacuation during an emergency, possibly resulting in injury to occupants.

(f) Compliance

You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

(g) Actions

Within six months after the effective date of this AD, do a detailed visual inspection of the tritium exit signs and emergency lighting strips for required brightness, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF50–33–038, dated July 5, 2010; or SBF100–33–023, Revision 1, dated November 4, 2010; as applicable. If any exit signs or emergency lighting strips are insufficiently bright, before further flight, replace the exit signs or emergency lighting strips, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF50–33–038, dated July 5, 2010; or SBF100–33–023, Revision 1, dated November 4, 2010; as applicable. A review of airplane maintenance records is acceptable in lieu of the inspection in this paragraph if the tritium exit signs and emergency lighting strips can be conclusively determined to have been manufactured in 2003 or earlier, from that review; however, the replacement in this paragraph must be accomplished before further flight after doing the review.

(h) Parts Installation

As of the effective date of this AD, no person may install any tritium exit signs or emergency lighting strips if the manufacturing date is seven years or more before the intended installation date, or if the manufacturing date cannot be determined; unless the tritium exit sign or emergency lighting strip has been inspected in accordance with paragraph (g) of this AD, and does not need replacement.

(i) Credit for Previous Actions

This paragraph provides credit for inspection and replacement of the tritium exit sign or emergency lighting strip, as required by paragraph (g) of this AD, if those actions were performed before the effective

date of this AD using Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100–33–023, dated July 5, 2010, as applicable.

(j) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, International Branch, ANM–116, Transport Airplane Directorate, 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 International Branch, send it to ATTN: Tom Rodriguez, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM–116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057–3356; telephone (425) 227–1137; fax (425) 227–1149. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. 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. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) *Airworthy Product:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

(k) Related Information

Refer to MCAI European Aviation Safety Agency Airworthiness Directive 2010–0261, dated December 9, 2010; for related information.

(1) Fokker Service Bulletin SBF50–33–038, dated July 5, 2010; and

(2) Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100–33–023, Revision 1, dated November 4, 2010.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) You must use the following service information to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the following service information under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51:

(i) Fokker Service Bulletin SBF50–33–038, dated July 5, 2010.

(ii) Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100–33–023, Revision 1, dated November 4, 2010.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Fokker Services B.V., Technical Services Dept., P.O. Box 231, 2150 AE Nieuw-Vennep, the Netherlands; telephone +31 (0)252–627–350; fax +31 (0)252–627–211; email technicalservices.fokkerservices@stork.com; Internet <http://www.myfokkerfleet.com>.

(3) You may review copies of the service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the

availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

(4) You may also review copies of the service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at an NARA facility, call 202-741-6030, or go to http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on January 26, 2012.

Kalene C. Yanamura,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-4437 Filed 2-28-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2012-0182; Directorate Identifier 2012-CE-005-AD; Amendment 39-16958; AD 2012-03-52]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Mooney Aviation Company, Inc. (Mooney) Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Mooney Aviation Company, Inc. (Mooney) Models M20R and M20TN airplanes. This emergency AD was sent previously to all known U.S. owners and operators of these airplanes. This AD requires inspecting the tail pitch trim assembly for correct positioning and proper attachment and inspecting the Huck Bolt fasteners for proper security with repair as necessary. The AD also requires sending the inspection results to the FAA and Mooney. This AD was prompted by a report of an incident on a Mooney Model M20TN airplane regarding failure of the tail pitch trim assembly, which could result in loss of control. We are issuing this AD to correct the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective February 29, 2012 to all persons except those persons to whom it was made immediately effective by Emergency AD 2012-03-52, issued on February 10, 2012, which contained the requirements of this amendment.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference

of a certain publication identified in the AD as of February 29, 2012.

We must receive comments on this AD by April 16, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- **Fax:** 202-493-2251.

- **Mail:** U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

- **Hand Delivery:** Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this AD, contact Mooney Aviation Company, Inc., 165 Al Mooney Road North, Kerrville, Texas 78028; telephone: (830) 896-6000; email: technicalsupport@mooney.com; Internet: www.mooney.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.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Operations Office 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 street address for the Docket Operations Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Andrew McAnaul, Aerospace Engineer, ASW-150 (c/o MIDO-43), 10100 Reunion Place, Suite 650, San Antonio, Texas 78216; telephone: (210) 308-3365; facsimile: (210) 308-3370; email: andrew.mcanaul@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

On February 10, 2012, we issued Emergency AD 2012-03-52, which requires inspecting the trim fitting, hinge, and filler plate of the tail pitch trim assembly for correct positioning and proper attachment and inspecting the Huck Bolt fasteners for proper security on certain Mooney Aviation Company, Inc. (Mooney) Models M20R

and M20TN airplanes. If incorrect positioning or improper/loose attachment is found, the owner/operator must contact Mooney for FAA-approved repair instructions. The AD also requires sending the inspection results to the FAA and Mooney. This emergency AD was sent previously to all known U.S. owners and operators of these airplanes.

This AD action was prompted by a report of an incident on a Mooney Model M20TN airplane regarding the tail pitch trim assembly. In this report, the affected airplane experienced an uncommanded significant pitch up attitude within seconds after takeoff and during the climb. The pilot then pushed the yoke forward and the aircraft still maintained a nose-up attitude.

The pilot stated that the “forces acting on the control column were so large that single pilot wasn’t able to handle that for more than just a few minutes.” The pilot and copilot had to use their knees to hold forward pressure on the flight controls to aid in preventing a departure from controlled flight. They had to maintain between 80 to 100 percent power to keep the aircraft at about 90 knots indicated airspeed to prevent the airplane from stalling. The only way they were able to descend was to introduce a series of turns.

On Mooney Models M20TN and M20R airplanes, the pitch trim is adjusted by rotating the entire tail assembly. The actuating arm pushes on a hinge fixed to the empennage forward bulkhead. The hinge attaches to the bulkhead using 10 Huck Bolt fasteners with swaged collars.

This aircraft was immediately inspected, and all 10 swaged collars that hold the tail trim assembly together had become unattached.

Mooney inspected several other aircraft and found that on one airplane the filler plate was incorrectly installed. The filler plate was not correctly installed between the aft side of the hinge and the bulkhead. Instead, the filler plate was located on the forward side of the hinge between the hinge and trim fitting. It was then noted the incident aircraft had the same issue, as shown in the upper circle of figure 1.

Because the hinge has a lip on the bottom, on the side toward the bulkhead (as shown in the bottom circle of figure 1), if the filler plate is not installed correctly, the hinge will not fit flush against the bulkhead, the Huck Bolt fasteners will not fit perpendicular to the bulkhead, and the collars will not swage properly. The condition also causes excessive tension pre-load on the Huck Bolts.