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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2022-0880; Project Identifier AD-2022-00620-T; Amendment 39-22126; AD 2022-15-06]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 777 airplanes. This AD was prompted by high electrical resistance within the gust suppression sensor (GSS) transorb modules due to corrosion on the transorb module threads. This AD requires disconnecting the connectors and capping and stowing the wires that had been attached to the affected transorb modules. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective August 18, 2022.

The FAA must receive comments on this AD by September 19, 2022.

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 <https://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.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0880; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday

through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations is listed above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joe Salameh, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Section, FAA, Seattle ACO Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3536; email: Joe.Salameh@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

During scheduled maintenance inspection, high electrical resistance was found across the GSS transorb modules. The most likely cause of the high resistance is corrosion over time of the transorb threads. High electrical resistance in both transorb modules, if not addressed, can result in two actuator control electronics (ACEs), which are part of the flight control system, being exposed to damaging lightning transient voltages in excess of the qualification levels, potentially inducing erroneous or oscillatory outputs to flight control surfaces, which could result in loss of control of the airplane. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

The gust suppression function on the Boeing Model 777 airplanes is a non-essential feature of the essential flight control system. The gust suppression function provides a minor improvement to ride quality during lateral wind gusts at low airspeeds. The actions required by this AD disable the non-essential gust suppression function, which does not affect the safety of flight.

FAA's Determination

The FAA is issuing this AD because the agency has determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

AD Requirements

This AD requires disconnecting the connectors from the affected transorbs and capping and stowing those wires.

Interim Action

The FAA considers this AD to be an interim action. The manufacturer is currently developing a modification that will address the unsafe condition identified in this AD. Once this modification is developed, approved, and available, the FAA might consider additional rulemaking.

Justification for Immediate Adoption and Determination of the Effective Date

Section 553(b)(3)(B) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 551 et seq.) authorizes agencies to dispense with notice and comment procedures for rules when the agency, for "good cause," finds that those procedures are "impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest." Under this section, an agency, upon finding good cause, may issue a final rule without providing notice and seeking comment prior to issuance. Further, section 553(d) of the APA authorizes agencies to make rules effective in less than thirty days, upon a finding of good cause.

An unsafe condition exists that requires the immediate adoption of this AD without providing an opportunity for public comments prior to adoption. The FAA has found that the risk to the flying public justifies forgoing notice and comment prior to adoption of this rule because failed electrical bonds in both transorb module lightning protection devices can cause two ACEs to be exposed to damaging lightning transient voltages. The failure mode of the transorb module is latent, and

therefore is not annunciated to the operator. Damaging lightning transient voltages in excess of the qualification levels could induce erroneous or oscillatory outputs to control surfaces and result in loss of control of the airplane. Accordingly, notice and opportunity for prior public comment are impracticable and contrary to the public interest pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3)(B).

In addition, the FAA finds that good cause exists pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d) for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days, for the same reasons the FAA found good cause to forgo notice and comment.

Comments Invited

The FAA invites you to send any written data, views, or arguments about this final rule. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include Docket No. FAA-2022-0880 and Project Identifier AD-2022-00620-T at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the final rule, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this final rule because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this final rule.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this AD contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this AD, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as "PROPIN." The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this AD. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Joe Salameh, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Section, FAA, Seattle ACO Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3536; email: Joe.Salameh@faa.gov. Any commentary that the FAA receives that is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) do not apply when an agency finds good cause pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 to adopt a rule without prior notice and comment. Because the FAA has determined that it has good cause to adopt this rule without notice and comment, RFA analysis is not required.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 279 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

Estimated Costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Disconnecting connectors, capping and stowing wires	3 work-hours × \$85 per hour = \$255	\$0	\$255	\$71,145

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.

The FAA is 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

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, and
- (2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

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:



2022-15-06 The Boeing Company: Amendment 39-22126; Docket No. FAA-2022-0880; Project Identifier AD-2022-00620-T.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective August 18, 2022.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 777-200, 777-200LR, 777-300, 777-300ER, and 777F series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 27, Flight controls.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by high electrical resistance within the gust suppression sensor (GSS) transorb modules due to corrosion on the transorb threads. The FAA is issuing this AD to address high electrical resistance in both transorb modules, which can result in two actuator control electronics (ACEs) being exposed to damaging lightning transient voltages in excess of the qualification levels, potentially inducing erroneous or oscillatory outputs to flight control surfaces, and result in loss of control of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

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

(g) Disconnect, Cap, and Stow Transorb Module Connectors

At the later of the times specified in paragraphs (g)(1) and (2) of this AD: Disconnect the connectors and cap and stow the wires to bundles/connectors W7314/D02006P and W7579/D02005P from the transorb module part numbers CLPT-12SP-06, -07, and -67.

Note 1 to the introductory text of paragraph (g): Guidance on locating wire bundles/connectors W7314/D02006P and W7579/D02005P can be found in Section 05-55-43 of the Boeing 777 airplane maintenance manual.

Note 2 to the introductory text of paragraph (g): Guidance on capping and stowing the wires once they are disconnected can be found in Section 20-10-11 of the Boeing Standard Wiring Practices Manual.

(1) Before the accumulation of 75,000 total flight hours or 23,000 total flight cycles, whichever occurs first.

(2) Within 3 months after the effective date of this AD.

(h) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Seattle 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 responsible Flight Standards 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 (i) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards 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 Company Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO Branch, FAA, 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.

(i) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Joe Salameh, Aerospace Engineer, Systems and Equipment Section, FAA, Seattle ACO Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3536; email: Joe.Salameh@faa.gov.

(j) Material Incorporated by Reference

None.

Issued on July 11, 2022.

Gaetano A. Sciortino,
Deputy Director for Strategic Initiatives, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2022-16606 Filed 8-1-22; 4:15 pm]