(b) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Standardization Branch, ANM–113, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance or Avionics Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Standardization Branch, ANM–113.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(d) The modification shall be done in accordance with Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100–34–015, Revision 2, dated November 27, 1990, which contains the following list of effective pages:

Page number	Revision level shown on page	Date shown on page
1, 5	2	November 27, 1990
2–4, 6–9	1	May 16, 1990

This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Fokker Aircraft USA, Inc., 1199 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(e) This amendment becomes effective on July 24,1996.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on July 1, 1996.

S.R. Miller,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 96–17219 Filed 7–8–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 95–NM–254–AD; Amendment 39–9686; AD 96–14–04]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10 and MD–11 Series Airplanes, and KC–10A (Military) Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10 and MD–11 series airplanes, and KC–10A (military) airplanes, that requires identifying and replacing certain lock link bolts in the nose landing gear (NLG). This amendment is prompted by a report indicating that certain bolts were improperly heat-treated during manufacturing, which makes them prone to failure. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent failure of the lock link bolts in the NLG, which could result in the collapse of the NLG.

DATES: Effective August 13, 1996.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of August 13, 1996.

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from McDonnell Douglas Corporation, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Technical Publications Business Administration, Department C1–L51 (2–60). This information may be examined at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, Rules Docket, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, Transport Airplane Directorate, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wahib Mina, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone (310) 627–5324; fax (310) 627–5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10 and MD–11 series airplanes, and KC–10A (military) airplanes was published in the Federal Register on March 18, 1996 (61 FR 10907). That action proposed to require a one-time visual inspection to identify suspect lock link bolts, and the replacement of those bolts with new serviceable bolts.

Interested persons have been afforded an opportunity to participate in the making of this amendment. Due consideration has been given to the comments received.

Support for the Proposal

Four commenters support the proposal.

Request To Allow Records Search in Lieu of Inspection

One commenter requests that the proposed rule be revised to allow operators to conduct a records search to determine if airplanes are equipped with the suspect bolt, rather than conduct an inspection of every airplane in order to determine if the bolt is installed. This commenter states that, for some operators, the NLG lock link bolts are required to have a tracking history (i.e., records track the bolt by serial number). For these operators, it would be more economically feasible, and just as productive, to conduct a records search in lieu of an inspection.

The FAA concurs. Paragraph (a) of the final rule has been revised to provide for the option of conducting a records search.

Request To Extend the Compliance Time for Replacement

Several commenters request that the proposed rule be revised to allow operators to replace suspect bolts at a later time. These commenters request that, instead of requiring that a suspect bolt be replaced prior to further flight after the inspection is accomplished, the proposed rule should permit operators to replace the bolt at any time after the inspection, but prior to the end of the 24-month compliance time. These commenters consider that this extension of the replacement time will obtain the same result as intended by the FAA, and will have a less disruptive impact on operators' schedules.

The FAA concurs that the bolts need not be replaced prior to further flight after the inspection (or records search) is accomplished. The FAA makes this finding based on the following data pertinent to the configuration of the suspect bolts themselves:

1. None of the suspect bolts were manufactured prior the initial production of the Model MD–11 series airplanes (in 1991). In light of this, the FAA is confident that none of the suspect bolts was installed as original equipment on any of the affected Model DC–10 series airplanes. (Model DC–10's have been produced since 1971.)

2. The suspect bolts were manufactured using a process that did not affect their static strength requirement, but did reduce their fatigue life. These bolts should have a fatigue life in the range of 58,281 landings; due to the manufacturing process used, however, the fatigue life

of the suspect bolts has been reduced to approximately 24,638 landings.

3. A review of the utilization rates of the current worldwide fleet indicates that the highest number of landings accumulated on any Model MD–11 series airplane is approximately 5,000 landings.

4. The average annual utilization rate of the airplanes affected by this AD is between 1,000 and 1,200 landings.

These data indicate that, if any suspect bolt had been installed as original equipment on a Model MD–11 (even those airplanes with the highest number of landings accumulated so far), or installed as a replacement component on a Model DC–10, the fatigue life ''remaining'' on any suspect bolt is long enough to permit continued use of that bolt for a 24-month period.

Based on these factors, the FAA has determined that a large enough margin of safety exists so that replacement of the suspect bolts may be accomplished within 24 months after the effective date of this AD, regardless of when the inspection (or records search) is performed. Paragraph (c) of the final rule has been revised to specify this.

Request To Permit Replacement With Other Than New Bolts

One commenter, the airframe manufacturer, requests that the proposed rule be revised to delete the requirement that a ''new'' bolt be used as a replacement bolt. This commenter states that the use of the term ''new'' excludes the use of refurbished or serviceable bolts that do not have one of the suspect serial numbers.

The FAA concurs. Serviceable (non-suspect) bolts are acceptable as replacement parts. Accordingly, paragraph (c) of the final rule has been revised to delete the word ''new'' from the description of required replacement bolts.

Request To Ensure Availability of Replacement Parts

One commenter expresses concerns that the replacement bolts will not be available in a timely manner. This commenter states that several service bulletins recently have been released by McDonnell Douglas that recommend inspections and replacement of high-strength landing gear parts that were improperly heat-treated. This commenter is concerned that the bolt suppliers may not be able to meet the concurrent demand for the large quantity of parts needed for the entire affected fleet.

The FAA acknowledges this commenters concerns, and just recently contacted the manufacturer on this very subject. The manufacturer has assured the FAA that its suppliers stand ready to meet the demand for parts for the total fleet.

Conclusion

After careful review of the available data, including the comments noted above, the FAA has determined that air safety and the public interest require the adoption of the rule with the changes previously described. The FAA has determined that these changes will neither increase the economic burden on any operator nor increase the scope of the AD.

Cost Impact

There are approximately 565 Model DC–10 and MD–11 series airplanes and KC–10A (military airplanes) of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 334 airplanes of U.S. registry will be affected by this proposed AD.

It will take approximately .5 work hour per airplane to accomplish either a one-time inspection or a commensurate records search, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the AD on U.S. operators is estimated to be $10,020, or $30 per airplane.

If a suspect lock link bolt is found to be installed on an airplane, its removal and replacement will take approximately 3 work hours to accomplish, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. (For operators of Model MD–11 series airplanes, the manufacturer has indicated that it will reimburse operators for certain of these labor costs as a labor credit allowance.) Replacement parts will be supplied by the manufacture at no charge to operators. Based on these figures, the cost impact of the replacement action on U.S. operators is estimated to be $180 per airplane.

The cost impact figures discussed above are based on assumptions that no operator has yet accomplished any of the requirements of this AD action, and that no operator would accomplish those actions in the future if this AD were not adopted.

Regulatory Impact

The regulations adopted herein will not have substantial direct effects 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, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

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

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

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

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends 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:

96–14–04 McDonnell Douglas: Amendment 39–9686. Docket 95–NM–254–AD.

Applicability: Model DC–10–10, –15, –30, and –40 series airplanes, and KC–10A airplanes, as listed in McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC10–32–242, dated November 1, 1995; and Model MD–11 series airplanes as listed in McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin MD11–32–060, dated November 6, 1995; certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each airplane identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For airplanes that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (e) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent collapse of the nose landing gear as a result of failure of the lock link bolt, accomplish the following:

(a) Within 24 months after the effective date of this AD, perform either a visual inspection or a records search to determine the serial number of the lock link bolt, part number (P/N) ACG7079–1, installed in the nose landing gear (NLG). If the visual inspection is accomplished, it must be conducted in accordance with procedures specified in McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC10–32–242, dated November 1, 1995, for Model DC–10 series airplanes; or McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin MD11–32–060, dated November 6, 1995, for Model MD–11 series airplanes.

(b) If the serial number of the lock link bolt is not AP001 through AP036 inclusive, or AP200 through AP344 inclusive: No further action is required by this AD.

(c) If the serial number of the lock link bolt is AP001 through AP036 inclusive, or AP200 through AP344 inclusive: Within 24 months after the effective date of this AD, replace the lock link bolt with a bolt, P/N ACG7079–1, that does not have one of those serial numbers.

(d) As of the effective date of this AD, no person shall install a lock link bolt, part number (P/N) ACG7079–1, having a serial number of AP001 through AP036 inclusive, or AP200 through AP344 inclusive, on any airplane.

(e) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an appropriate FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Los Angeles ACO.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Los Angeles ACO.

(f) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the airplane to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(g) The inspection shall be done in accordance with McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin DC10–32–242, dated November 1, 1995, for Model DC–10 series airplanes; and McDonnell Douglas Service Bulletin MD11–32–060, dated November 6, 1995, for Model MD–11 series airplanes. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from McDonnell Douglas Corporation, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Technical Publications Business Administration, Department C1–L51 (2–60). Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, Transport Airplane Directorate, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(h) This amendment becomes effective on August 13, 1996.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 27, 1996.

S.R. Miller,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 96–16951 Filed 7–8–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96–NM–133–AD; Amendment 39–9691; AD 96–14–07]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model MD–11 and MD–11F Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment supersedes an existing airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model MD–11 and MD–11F series airplanes, that currently requires repetitive inspections of the tail tank fuel pipe assembly and the associated mounting brackets in the aft fuselage compartment, and follow-on actions, if necessary. That AD also provides for an optional terminating modification for the repetitive inspections. This amendment deletes the optional terminating modification, and expands the applicability of the existing AD to include additional airplanes. This amendment is prompted by reports of cracking or bending of the fuel pipe mounting support and/or attaching bracket in the aft fuselage compartment due to a fuel pressure surge that caused repetitive loading of this area. The actions specified in this AD are intended to prevent such cracking/bending, which could expose the fuel pipe coupling O-ring. An exposed O-ring could lose its sealing effect and could allow a fuel leak in the aft fuselage compartment, which may result in a possible in-flight or ground fire.

DATES: Effective July 24, 1996.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of July 24, 1996.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before September 9, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96–NM–133–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from McDonnell Douglas Corporation, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90846, Attention: Technical Publications Business Administration, Department C1–L51 (2–60). This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, Transport Airplane Directorate, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Raymond Vakili, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM–140L, FAA, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone (310) 627–5262; fax (310) 627–5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 4, 1991, the FAA issued AD 91–24–09, amendment 39–8095 (56 FR 61364, December 3, 1991), applicable to certain McDonnell Douglas Model MD–11 and MD–11F series airplanes. That AD requires repetitive visual inspections of the tail tank fuel pipe assembly and the associated mounting brackets located in the aft fuselage compartment to verify the correct position of the pipe flange and to detect damaged brackets. It also requires various follow-on actions, if any discrepancy is detected. That AD also provides for an optional terminating modification for the repetitive inspections. That action was prompted by a report of an uncontained fuel leak in the aft fuselage compartment on an in-service airplane, which was the result of migration of the tail tank fuel pipe assembly, and consequent exposure of the O-ring that provides the seal between the pipe assembly and the coupling shroud assembly. The actions required by that AD are intended to prevent a fuel leak in the aft fuselage compartment area, and the possibility of an in-flight or ground fire.

Actions Since Issuance of Previous Rule

Since the issuance of that AD, the FAA has received several reports of cracking or bending of the fuel pipe mounting support and/or attaching bracket at station Y=2033.750 in the aft