

IMPORT ASSESSMENT TABLE—
Continued
[Raw Cotton Fiber]

| HTS No. | Conv. fact. | Cents/kg. |
|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 6204594060 | 0.2664 | 0.3307 |
| 6204622010 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6204622025 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6204622050 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6204624005 | 1.2451 | 1.5454 |
| 6204624010 | 1.2451 | 1.5454 |
| 6204624020 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6204624025 | 1.2451 | 1.5454 |
| 6204624030 | 1.2451 | 1.5454 |
| 6204624035 | 1.2451 | 1.5454 |
| 6204624040 | 1.2451 | 1.5454 |
| 6204624045 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6204624050 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6204624055 | 0.9854 | 1.2231 |
| 6204624060 | 0.9854 | 1.2231 |
| 6204624065 | 0.9854 | 1.2231 |
| 6204633510 | 0.2546 | 0.316 |
| 6204633530 | 0.2546 | 0.316 |
| 6204633532 | 0.2437 | 0.3025 |
| 6204633540 | 0.2437 | 0.3025 |
| 6204692510 | 0.249 | 0.3091 |
| 6204692540 | 0.2437 | 0.3025 |
| 6204699044 | 0.249 | 0.3091 |
| 6204699046 | 0.249 | 0.3091 |
| 6204699050 | 0.249 | 0.3091 |
| 6205202015 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202020 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202025 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202030 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202035 | 1.1206 | 1.3909 |
| 6205202046 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202050 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202060 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202065 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202070 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205202075 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6205302010 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6205302030 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6205302040 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6205302050 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6205302070 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6205302080 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6206100040 | 0.1245 | 0.1545 |
| 6206303010 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6206303020 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6206303030 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6206303040 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6206303050 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6206303060 | 0.9961 | 1.2364 |
| 6206403010 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6206403030 | 0.3113 | 0.3864 |
| 6206900040 | 0.249 | 0.3091 |
| 6207110000 | 1.0852 | 1.347 |
| 6207199010 | 0.3617 | 0.4489 |
| 6207210010 | 1.1085 | 1.3759 |
| 6207210030 | 1.1085 | 1.3759 |
| 6207220000 | 0.3695 | 0.4586 |
| 6207911000 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6207913010 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6207913020 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6208210010 | 1.0583 | 1.3136 |
| 6208210020 | 1.0583 | 1.3136 |
| 6208220000 | 0.1245 | 0.1545 |
| 6208911010 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6208911020 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6208913010 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6209201000 | 1.1577 | 1.4369 |
| 6209203000 | 0.9749 | 1.21 |
| 6209205030 | 0.9749 | 1.21 |

IMPORT ASSESSMENT TABLE—
Continued
[Raw Cotton Fiber]

| HTS No. | Conv. fact. | Cents/kg. |
|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 6209205035 | 0.9749 | 1.21 |
| 6209205040 | 1.2186 | 1.5125 |
| 6209205045 | 0.9749 | 1.21 |
| 6209205050 | 0.9749 | 1.21 |
| 6209303020 | 0.2463 | 0.3057 |
| 6209303040 | 0.2463 | 0.3057 |
| 6210109010 | 0.2291 | 0.2844 |
| 6210403000 | 0.0391 | 0.0485 |
| 6210405020 | 0.4556 | 0.5655 |
| 6211111010 | 0.1273 | 0.158 |
| 6211111020 | 0.1273 | 0.158 |
| 6211118010 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6211118020 | 1.1455 | 1.4218 |
| 6211320007 | 0.8461 | 1.0502 |
| 6211320010 | 1.0413 | 1.2925 |
| 6211320015 | 1.0413 | 1.2925 |
| 6211320030 | 0.9763 | 1.2118 |
| 6211320060 | 0.9763 | 1.2118 |
| 6211320070 | 0.9763 | 1.2118 |
| 6211330010 | 0.3254 | 0.4039 |
| 6211330030 | 0.3905 | 0.4847 |
| 6211330035 | 0.3905 | 0.4847 |
| 6211330040 | 0.3905 | 0.4847 |
| 6211420010 | 1.0413 | 1.2925 |
| 6211420020 | 1.0413 | 1.2925 |
| 6211420025 | 1.1715 | 1.4541 |
| 6211420060 | 1.0413 | 1.2925 |
| 6211420070 | 1.1715 | 1.4541 |
| 6211430010 | 0.2603 | 0.3231 |
| 6211430030 | 0.2603 | 0.3231 |
| 6211430040 | 0.2603 | 0.3231 |
| 6211430050 | 0.2603 | 0.3231 |
| 6211430060 | 0.2603 | 0.3231 |
| 6211430066 | 0.2603 | 0.3231 |
| 6212105020 | 0.2412 | 0.2994 |
| 6212109010 | 0.9646 | 1.1973 |
| 6212109020 | 0.2412 | 0.2994 |
| 6212200020 | 0.3014 | 0.3741 |
| 6212900030 | 0.1929 | 0.2394 |
| 6213201000 | 1.1809 | 1.4657 |
| 6213202000 | 1.0628 | 1.3191 |
| 6213901000 | 0.4724 | 0.5863 |
| 6214900010 | 0.9043 | 1.1224 |
| 6216000800 | 0.2351 | 0.2918 |
| 6216001720 | 0.6752 | 0.8381 |
| 6216003800 | 1.2058 | 1.4966 |
| 6216004100 | 1.2058 | 1.4966 |
| 6217109010 | 1.0182 | 1.2638 |
| 6217109030 | 0.2546 | 0.316 |
| 6301300010 | 0.8766 | 1.088 |
| 6301300020 | 0.8766 | 1.088 |
| 6302100010 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302215010 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302215020 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302217010 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302217020 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302217050 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302219010 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302219020 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302219050 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302222010 | 0.4091 | 0.5078 |
| 6302222020 | 0.4091 | 0.5078 |
| 6302313010 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302313050 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302315050 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302317010 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302317020 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302317040 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302317050 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |

IMPORT ASSESSMENT TABLE—
Continued
[Raw Cotton Fiber]

| HTS No. | Conv. fact. | Cents/kg. |
|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 6302319010 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302319020 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302319040 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302319050 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302322020 | 0.4091 | 0.5078 |
| 6302322040 | 0.4091 | 0.5078 |
| 6302402010 | 0.9935 | 1.2331 |
| 6302511000 | 0.5844 | 0.7254 |
| 6302512000 | 0.8766 | 1.088 |
| 6302513000 | 0.5844 | 0.7254 |
| 6302514000 | 0.8182 | 1.0155 |
| 6302600010 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302600020 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6302600030 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6302910005 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6302910015 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6302910025 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6302910035 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6302910045 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6302910050 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6302910060 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6303110000 | 0.9448 | 1.1727 |
| 6303910000 | 0.6429 | 0.798 |
| 6304111000 | 1.0629 | 1.3193 |
| 6304190500 | 1.052 | 1.3057 |
| 6304191000 | 1.1689 | 1.4508 |
| 6304191500 | 0.4091 | 0.5078 |
| 6304192000 | 0.4091 | 0.5078 |
| 6304910020 | 0.9351 | 1.1606 |
| 6304920000 | 0.9351 | 1.1606 |
| 6505901540 | 1.181 | 1.4659 |
| 6505902060 | 0.9935 | 1.2331 |
| 6505902545 | 0.5844 | 0.7254 |

* * * * *

Dated: June 2, 1997.

Lon Hatamiya,
*Administrator, Agricultural Marketing
Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-14878 Filed 6-5-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

9 CFR Part 381

[Docket No. 95-011P]

RIN 0583-AB95

Continuous Chilling of Split Poultry Portions

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: FSIS is proposing to amend the poultry products inspection regulations to specify that the continuous immersion chilling of the front or rear portions of transversely-split carcasses is permitted. The existing regulations permit the continuous

chilling of whole carcasses or "major portions," including front or rear portions, resulting from trimming or salvage. This proposal would define "major portions" to include the front or rear portions of transversely-split carcasses, without identifying the operation creating the portions. The proposed change would afford additional flexibility to poultry establishments in adopting efficient production techniques, such as on-line carcass splitting, that meet food safety performance standards. This proposal is compatible with FSIS initiatives addressing fecal contamination and moisture absorption of raw poultry products.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before August 5, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Send an original and two copies of comments to FSIS Docket Clerk, DOCKET #95-011P, Room 3806, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700. Reference material cited in this document and any comments received will be available for public inspection in the FSIS Docket Room from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Alice Thaler, Chief, Concepts and Design Branch, Inspection Methods Development Division, Office of Policy, Program Development, and Evaluation, (202) 720-3219.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The existing regulations governing the chilling of poultry carcasses and parts were developed in the late 1960's, when the most popular form of ready-to-cook poultry consumed in the United States was the whole bird. Since that time, the market demand and the variety of poultry products have greatly expanded. With that expansion, the demand for poultry parts and further processed products relative to whole poultry carcasses has increased. To illustrate this change: in 1969, when over 2 billion pounds of young chickens were federally inspected and passed, 71 percent of the chickens were marketed as whole carcasses, 25 percent were cut up or sold as parts, and 4 percent were further processed. In 1992, when 21 billion pounds were inspected and passed, 15 percent were marketed as whole carcasses, while 55 percent were sold as parts, and 30 percent were further processed.

The trend continues. In 1995, when 23 billion pounds were produced, 10.7 percent were sold as whole birds, 53 percent were cut-up, and 36.3 percent

were further processed. It is estimated that currently only 10 percent of young chickens is being marketed whole, while 53 percent is "cut up" and 37 percent is further processed.

The poultry industry has sought ways of improving production efficiency to meet the steadily increasing demand. One improvement involves splitting the dressed poultry carcasses transversely, into front and rear sections, after evisceration.

After chilling, the split carcasses can be routed to the cut-up operation in the same establishment or they can be packaged and shipped. All raw poultry products, whether white meat or dark meat, must be chilled to a safe temperature before being shipped from the establishment. For those split carcass portions that are shipped directly after chilling, the establishment avoids some in-plant handling costs and reduces the time-to-market for the split carcass portions. If the split portions are to be cut up or further processed on the same premises, the establishment gains some production flexibility that is related to the different characteristics of the front and rear portions. The front portion, including the breast and wings, is mostly white meat; the rear section, including the lower back and legs, is mostly dark meat. The front portion is commonly chilled on the bone to prevent a condition known as "cold shortening," a contraction of the muscle tissues that would make hand deboning prior to chilling infeasible. If deboned before being chilled, the resulting poultry meat would be too tough for many uses. Chilling on the bone limits the muscle tissue contraction and preserves the tenderness of the meat.

The rear, or dark-meat portion, however, is less susceptible to cold shortening, and can either be routed to the cutting room and "hot-deboned," i.e., deboned without first being chilled, or it can be run through the chiller before being packaged and shipped. The dark meat is used in a variety of popular products, including salami and turkey ham. There is an obvious advantage to the establishment in having the dark raw poultry meat available for further processing without the delay of chilling. In any event, hot-deboned product is chilled within two hours of the time of slaughter and dressing.

There is a potential food safety advantage to splitting poultry carcasses. Since the smaller the object to be cooled, the faster its temperature drops, a split carcass portion can be cooled more quickly than a whole carcass. Decreasing the cooling time significantly diminishes the period in which the carcass portion is in the

"danger zone," the temperature range favorable for the growth of microbial populations.

Another potential food safety advantage from transversely splitting the carcass is that the interior of split carcass portions is more visible than the interior of whole carcasses. Federal inspectors and establishment employees would be able to conduct a better visual inspection of the interior cavity of split carcasses than of whole carcasses. In this regard, the establishment could situate the splitting operation on the production line before the location where the required pre-chill finished product standards (FPS) tests are performed. With a better view of the carcass interior, the establishment could conduct more effective FPS tests. Long-term improvements in process control as well as a better, safer product could result.

One particular advantage of transversely splitting carcasses could be an improved chance, while conducting the FPS test, of observing contamination by feces or extraneous material and of acting to prevent such contamination. This would be especially helpful in carrying out regulations FSIS recently published (62 FR 4139, February 4, 1997) that establish a "zero tolerance" for feces on raw poultry carcasses entering the chiller. The "zero tolerance" will be applied during pre-chill FPS tests on both split carcasses and whole carcasses.

Section 381.66(c)(2)(iv) of the regulations permits the continuous chilling of "parts of major size, either front or rear portions, wherein the major portion of the poultry carcass remains intact," as long as such portions were created by trimming or salvage operations. Trimming operations remove some part of a poultry carcass. For example, a broken wing may be trimmed from a breast. Salvage operations, on the other hand, are intended to save a portion of the carcass by cutting it away from an unacceptable portion. An example of a salvage procedure is the splitting of the carcass into front and rear portions to save the breast portion while condemning the rear portion that has become adulterated. Section 381.66(c)(2)(iv) of the current poultry products inspection regulations permits such major portions resulting from partial trimming or salvage operations to be chilled in a continuous chiller.

Some have interpreted the regulations as not permitting the immersion chilling of split poultry portions that were created other than by trimming or salvage. The regulations were developed during the late 1960's and reflect the

production and market conditions of that period. In those days, as stated above, poultry industry operations were oriented primarily toward the marketing of whole birds. The regulations provide for the handling of useable portions of carcasses that cannot be marketed as whole birds. The "parts of major size" or "major portions" referred to in the regulations were typically the result of a trimming or salvage procedure and were available for sale as parts or for further processing, which at that time constituted the smaller part of the raw poultry market.

The regulations governing the chilling of poultry parts, including the provisions addressing "major portions," were intended to prevent the marketing of products containing excessive moisture. This form of adulteration might occur if individual poultry parts, such as drumsticks, thighs, split breasts, or split halves (carcasses split longitudinally along the sternum into "mirror image" portions) were permitted to be cooled in continuous immersion chillers. Under most current processing conditions, such individual parts are likely to absorb more water than "major portions." These individual parts may be cooled only in the air, in ice, or under a spray of water with continuous draining.

On the other hand, whole carcasses and major portions of carcasses may be cooled in continuous chillers, provided that the moisture absorption limits prescribed in the regulations are not exceeded. Like the whole carcass, the front or rear portions of transversely split carcasses absorb incidental amounts of moisture when placed in continuous chillers. This is true whether the portion was created by trimming, salvage operation, or a procedure such as on-line carcass-splitting.

Establishments that have tested split-carcass processing methods under FSIS supervision have achieved favorable results in keeping water absorption low, in chilling product rapidly to a safe temperature, and in maintaining product wholesomeness. Proper application of these carcass splitting methods yields product that is not adulterated.

FSIS has determined that the regulatory provision for chilling major portions should be reworded to specifically include transversely split carcass portions, as described above, regardless of the operation which created the portions. The Agency is proposing to modify the definition of "major portion" to include these split-carcasses and carcasses from which small pieces have been removed. This

proposal would not affect the existing regulatory restrictions on the chilling of individual parts.

This proposal concerns the application of existing moisture retention and absorption standards to split carcass portions, rather than the standards, themselves. FSIS is developing proposed regulations addressing the current regulatory limits on moisture absorption and retention in dressed poultry carcasses and parts.

This proposed rule is limited to clarifying the regulations to accommodate the processing of splitting poultry carcasses. The proposal would amend the chilling requirement at § 381.66(b)(2) to apply both to whole carcasses and to major portions, as defined at proposed § 381.170(b)(22) to include transversely-split carcasses. Section 381.66(b)(2) would also be amended to refer to the new § 381.170(b)(22) rather than to § 381.66(c)(2)(iv).

This proposed rule would also amend § 381.66(c)(2)(iv) by removing the word "carcasses" from the term "split carcasses" and replacing it with "halves." "Split halves" is a term widely used in the poultry industry to denote the left and right halves of a poultry carcass divided lengthwise. The amended paragraph would continue to prohibit the continuous chilling of split halves.

FSIS would continue to require establishments creating split carcass portions to meet the same moisture absorption and retention limits for split as for whole carcasses. These limits are set forth in 9 CFR 381.66(d)(3), Table 3, and 381.66(d)(4)(ii).

Finally, FSIS is proposing, at proposed § 381.170(b)(22), to define "major portions" as carcasses from which small parts may be missing, or the front or rear portions of transversely split carcasses. As mentioned, the amended § 381.66(b)(2) would refer to the new definition.

Executive Order 12866

This proposed rule has been determined to be not significant and was not reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Order 12866.

Executive Order 12988

This proposed rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. States and local jurisdictions are preempted by the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) from imposing any marking or packaging requirements on federally inspected poultry products that are in addition to, or different than, those

imposed under the PPIA. States and local jurisdictions may, however, exercise concurrent jurisdiction over poultry products that are outside official establishments for the purpose of preventing the distribution of poultry products that are misbranded or adulterated under the PPIA, or, in the case of imported articles, which are not at such an establishment, after their entry into the United States.

This proposed rule is not intended to have retroactive effect.

There are no applicable administrative procedures that must be exhausted prior to any judicial challenge to the provisions of this proposed rule. However, the administrative procedures specified in 9 CFR 381.35 must be exhausted prior to any judicial challenge of the application of the provisions of this proposed rule, if the challenge involves any decision of an FSIS employee relating to inspection services provided under the PPIA.

Effect on Small Entities

The Administrator has made an initial determination that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601). This proposed rule will not impose any additional requirements on poultry processors. Compliance with this proposed rule is voluntary; poultry processors that intentionally split poultry carcasses into major portions as a result of a trimming or salvage operation do not have to cool the product using ice and water in a continuous chiller. They may cool major portions using air, ice, or under a spray of water with continuous drainage. Poultry processors opting to chill major parts resulting from production techniques such as on-line carcass-splitting could do so in a continuous ice and water chiller. This would allow them to appropriately handle the separated carcass portions immediately after splitting. The white meat portion could immediately be chilled to the proper temperature for further processing or direct sale to consumers, while the dark meat portion, which is usually processed, could be directly deboned and used in further processed cooked products.

List of Subjects in 9 CFR Part 381

Poultry and poultry products.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, FSIS is proposing to amend 9 CFR part 381 as follows:

PART 381—POULTRY PRODUCTS INSPECTION REGULATIONS

1. The authority citation for part 381 would continue to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 138f; 7 U.S.C. 450; 21 U.S.C. 451–470; 7 CFR 2.18, 2.53.

2. Section 381.66 is amended by revising the first sentence of paragraph (b)(2); by revising the first and second sentences of paragraph (c)(2)(iv) and, in the last sentence of (c)(2)(iv), by removing the words “from salvage operations,” and by replacing the word “carcasses” with the word “halves” to read as follows:

§ 381.66 Temperatures and chilling and freezing procedures.

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(2) Major portions of poultry carcasses, as defined in § 381.170(b)(22), and poultry carcasses shall be chilled to 40° F. or lower within the times specified below: * * *

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(2) * * *

(iv) Major portions of poultry carcasses, as defined in § 381.170(b)(22), may be chilled in water and ice, including chilling in continuous chillers. * * *

* * * * *

3. Paragraph (b)(22) is added to § 381.170 to read as follows:

§ 381.170 Standards for kinds and classes, and for cuts of raw poultry.

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(22) “Major portions” of eviscerated poultry carcasses are either carcasses from which parts may be missing, or the front or rear portions of transversely split carcasses.

Done at Washington, DC, on May 29, 1997.

Thomas J. Billy,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 97–14875 Filed 6–5–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–DM–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96–NM–206–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 767 Series Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes the adoption of a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain Boeing Model 767 series airplanes. The proposal would require replacement of the existing retaining bolt of the attendant seat lap belt with a new bolt and a washer. This proposal is prompted by a report indicating that, due to a missing washer, the belt end fittings of the double flight attendant seats can become loose. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to ensure that a washer between the bolt head and bushing is installed. A missing washer could allow movement of the belt end fittings, which can cause the restraint belts to release and, consequently, result in injury to the flight attendants.

DATES: Comments must be received by July 17, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96–NM–206–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124–2207. This information may be examined at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Monica Nemecek, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; telephone (425) 227–2773; fax (425) 227–1181.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications shall identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA–public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: “Comments to Docket Number 96–NM–206–AD.” The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, ANM–103, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96–NM–206–AD, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98055–4056.

Discussion

The FAA has received a report indicating that, on certain Boeing Model 767 series airplanes, the restraint anchor configuration is incorrect for the lap restraint belts of the double flight attendant seats that are wall mounted. Investigation revealed that certain types of restraint belts do not have a washer between the bolt head and bushing as part of the anchor configuration. Without the washer, movement of the belt end fittings can cause the restraint belts to release. This condition, if not corrected, could result in injury to the flight attendants.

Explanation of Relevant Service Information

The FAA has reviewed and approved Boeing Service Bulletin 767–25–0217, dated January 13, 1994, which describes procedures for replacement of the existing retaining bolt of the attendant seat lap belt with a new bolt and a washer. Accomplishment of these actions will ensure that the restraint belts of the double flight attendant seats that are wall mounted cannot inadvertently come loose from the end fittings.

Explanation of Requirements of Proposed Rule

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other products of this same type design, for certain airplanes, the proposed AD would require