



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2026-3865; Project Identifier AD-2025-01395-T]

RIN 2120-AA64

### Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2021-02-13, which applies to certain The Boeing Company Model 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, and -900 series airplanes. AD 2021-02-13 requires inspections of the fuselage skin and bear strap at the forward galley door between certain stations for cracks, and applicable on-condition actions. Since the FAA issued AD 2021-02-13, a report was received of cracking outside the required inspection area, and it has been determined that additional airplanes may be subject to the identified unsafe condition. This proposed AD would continue to require the actions of AD 2021-02-13 and would add airplanes to the applicability. This proposed AD would also add inspections for an extended inspection area. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**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 [regulations.gov](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.

*AD Docket:* You may examine the AD docket at [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2026-3865; 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 NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

*Material Incorporated by Reference:*

- For Boeing material identified in this proposed AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone 562-797-1717; website [myboeingfleet.com](http://myboeingfleet.com).

- You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available at [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2026-3865.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Luis Cortez-Muniz, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3958; email: [luis.a.cortez-muniz@faa.gov](mailto:luis.a.cortez-muniz@faa.gov).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments using a method listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2026-3865; Project Identifier AD-2025-01395-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, 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 proposal 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 regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

### **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 NPRM 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 NPRM, 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 NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Luis Cortez-Muniz, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3958; email: [luis.a.cortez-muniz@faa.gov](mailto:luis.a.cortez-muniz@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.

## **Background**

The FAA issued AD 2021-02-13, Amendment 39-21396 (86 FR 10776, February 23, 2021) (AD 2021-02-13), for certain The Boeing Company Model 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, and -900 series airplanes. AD 2021-02-13 was prompted by reports of cracks in the bear strap from station (STA) 290 to STA 296, and between stringers S-8R and S-9R, sometimes common to fasteners in the gap cover and emanating from rough sanding marks found on the surface of the bear strap. AD 2021-02-13 requires inspections of the fuselage skin and bear strap at the forward galley door between certain stations for cracks, and applicable on-condition actions. The agency issued AD 2021-02-13 to address cracking of the bear strap, which could result in severing of the bear strap, possibly leading to uncontrolled decompression and loss of structural integrity of the airplane.

## **Actions Since AD 2021-02-13 Was Issued**

Since the FAA issued AD 2021-02-13, the FAA received a report that during routine maintenance, a crack was found on the forward galley door bear strap of a Model 737-900ER series airplane, which is not included in the applicability of AD 2021-02-13. In addition, cracks were found in the bear strap between stringers S-7R and S-9R, and the FAA determined that inspections of the surrounding stub frame for cracking are necessary. The FAA has determined that these additional areas require inspections, and Model 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, -900, and -900ER series airplanes having line numbers 1763 and subsequent are subject to the same unsafe condition.

## **FAA's Determination**

The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

## **Material Incorporated by Reference Under 1 CFR Part 51**

The FAA reviewed Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025. This material specifies the following procedures including options, depending on configuration, and applicable on-condition actions:

- Internal general visual inspection of the bear strap and external general visual inspection of the fuselage skin and gap cover for any repair.
- External general visual inspection of the fuselage skin and gap cover for any external repair.
- Internal general visual inspection of the forward galley door cutout stub frame for any repair.

On-condition actions include obtaining and following alternative inspection instructions and doing the inspections if repairs are found, repetitive HFEC inspections for cracks, low frequency eddy current (LFEC) inspections for cracks, and replacement or repair.

This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

## **Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM**

Although this proposed AD does not explicitly restate the requirements of AD 2021-02-13, this proposed AD would retain all of the requirements of AD 2021-02-13. Those requirements are referenced in the material identified previously, which, in turn, is referenced in paragraph (g) of this proposed AD.

This proposed AD would revise the applicability to add Model 737-900ER series airplanes and would add inspections for an extended inspection area. This proposed AD would also require accomplishing the actions specified in the material already described, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD.

For information on the procedures and compliance times, see this material at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2026-3865.

**Costs of Compliance**

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 1,965 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

**Estimated costs for required actions**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Labor cost</b>	<b>Parts cost</b>	<b>Cost per product</b>	<b>Cost on U.S. operators</b>
Inspection (retained action from AD 2021-02-13)	Up to 28 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,380	\$0	Up to \$2,380	Up to \$4,676,700
Inspection of the stub frame (new proposed action)	Up to 25 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,125	0	Up to 2,125	Up to 4,175,625

The FAA estimates the following costs to do any necessary on-condition action that would be required based on the results of the proposed inspection. The agency has no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need this on-condition action:

## On-condition costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
External HFEC and LFEC inspection for cracks	Up to 28 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,380	\$0	Up to \$2,380
HFEC inspection for cracks	Up to 27 work-hours per inspection cycle	\$0	Up to \$2,295 per inspection cycle
Stub frame replacement	35 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,975	\$1,400	\$4,375

The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the bear strap replacement and other on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

### 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

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would 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 proposed regulation:

(1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(3) Would not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a

substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

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

### **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 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:

a. Removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2021-02-13, Amendment 39-21396

(86 FR 10776, February 23, 2021), and

b. Adding the following new AD:

**The Boeing Company:** Docket No. FAA-2026-3865; Project Identifier

AD-2025-01395-T.

#### **(a) Comments Due Date**

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by  
[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL  
REGISTER].

**(b) Affected ADs**

This AD replaces AD 2021-02-13, Amendment 39-21396 (86 FR 10776, February 23, 2021) (AD 2021-02-13).

**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 737-600, -700, -700C, -800, -900, and -900ER series airplanes, certificated in any category.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by reports of cracks in the bear strap from station (STA) 290 to STA 296, and between stringers S-7R and S-9R, sometimes common to fasteners in the gap cover and emanating from rough sanding marks found on the surface of the bear strap, and by a report of cracking outside the required inspection area. The FAA is issuing this AD to address cracking of the fuselage skin, bear strap, and stub frame. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in severing of the bear strap, possibly leading to uncontrolled decompression and loss of structural integrity of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

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

**(g) Inspections and Corrective Actions**

Except as specified by paragraph (h) of this AD: At the applicable times specified in the “Compliance” paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025, do all applicable actions identified in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025.

**Note 1 to paragraph (g):** Guidance for accomplishing the actions required by this AD can be found in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 737-53A1383, Revision 3, dated

July 30, 2025, which is referred to in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025.

**(h) Exceptions to Requirements Bulletin Specifications**

(1) Where the Compliance Time columns of the tables in the “Compliance” paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025, refer to the Revision 2 issue date of Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025, specifies contacting Boeing for alternative inspections: This AD requires doing the alternative inspections and applicable on-condition actions using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i) of this AD.

**(i) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)**

(1) The Manager, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety 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 (j) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: [AMOC@faa.gov](mailto:AMOC@faa.gov). Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(2) 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, AIR-520, Continued Operational Safety 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.

(3) AMOCs for repairs approved for AD 2021-02-13 are approved as AMOCs for the corresponding provisions of Boeing Alert Requirement Bulletin 737-53A1383, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025, that are required by paragraph (g) of this AD, for the area covered by the repair only.

**(j) Additional Information**

For more information about this AD, contact Luis Cortez-Muniz, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone: 206-231-3958; email: [luis.a.cortez-muniz@faa.gov](mailto:luis.a.cortez-muniz@faa.gov).

**(k) Material Incorporated by Reference**

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the material listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this material as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 737-53A1383 RB, Revision 3, dated July 30, 2025.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For Boeing material identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminister Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone 562-797-1717; website [myboeingfleet.com](http://myboeingfleet.com).

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(5) You may view this material at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, visit [www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations](http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations) or email [fr.inspection@nara.gov](mailto:fr.inspection@nara.gov).

Issued on April 21, 2026.

Victor Wicklund,  
Acting Director, Integrated Certificate Management Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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