non-destructive inspection (NDI) procedures. This amendment is prompted by new data submitted by the manufacturer indicating that certain revisions to the program are necessary in order to clarify some PSE's and some NDI procedures. The actions specified by this AD are intended to prevent fatigue cracking that could compromise the structural integrity of these airplanes.

DATES: Effective January 2, 1996.

The incorporation by reference of McDonnell Douglas Report No. L26–012, ''DC–10 Supplemental Inspection Document (SID),'' Volume I, Revision 5, dated October 1994; Volume II, Revision 5, dated October 1994; and Volume III–94, dated November 1994, as listed in the regulations, is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of January 2, 1996.

The incorporation by reference of McDonnell Douglas Report No. L26–012, ''DC–10 Supplemental Inspection Document (SID),'' Volume I, Revision 3, dated December 1992, Volume II, Revision 3, dated December 1992, and Volume III–92, dated October 1992, as listed in the regulations, was approved previously by the Director of the Federal Register as of November 24, 1993 (58 FR 54949, October 25, 1993).

ADDRESSES: The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from McDonnell Douglas Corporation, P.O. Box 1771, Long Beach, California 90846–1771, Attention: Business Unit Manager, Contract Data Management C1–255 (35–22). 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: Maureen Moreland, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM–120L, FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone (310) 627–5238; fax (310) 627–5210.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A proposal to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) by superseding AD 93–17–09, amendment 39–8680 (58 FR 54949, October 25, 1993), which is applicable to McDonnell Douglas Model DC–10 series airplanes and KC–10A (military) airplanes, was published as a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking in the Federal Register on September 7, 1995 (60 FR 46544). The action proposed to require the implementation of a program of structural inspections to detect and correct fatigue cracking in order to ensure the continued airworthiness of these airplanes as they approach the manufacturer's original fatigue design life goal.

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

Several commenters support the proposed rule.

One commenter notes that Volume III–94 of McDonnell Douglas Report No. L26–012, ''DC–10 Supplemental Inspection Document (SID),'' dated November 1994 (referenced in the proposal as the appropriate source of service information) changed 18 Principle Structural Elements (PSE) from Fleet Leader Operator Sample (FLOS) inspections to Fleet Leader Sample (FLS) inspections. The commenter states that these changes were made because operators submitted an insufficient number of results from FLOS inspections. The commenter requests that, in future revisions of the document, these FLS inspections be changed to 100 percent inspections, which would simplify scheduling and be more cost effective.

The FAA does not concur with the commenter's request to change FLS inspections to 100 percent inspections. The FAA finds that Volume III–94 of the SID changed eight PSE's from FLOS inspections to FLS inspections because of a decrease in the sample size (i.e., fewer Model DC–10 series airplanes in the SID program). The inspections in the McDonnell Douglas SID programs were established using specific criteria for determining whether a PSE should be defined as FLOS, FLS, or 100 percent. The manufacturer established these criteria only after extensive and detailed consultations with large numbers of operators and with the FAA. Because of the decrease in sample size, these PSE's meet the criteria of FLS, but not that of FLOS or 100 percent. The 100 percent inspection is only applicable if an insufficient number of samples exists in the sample size to utilize sampling concepts.

One operator requests that the proposed rule be revised to include provisions for operators that combine fleets with other operators under the same maintenance program. The FAA does not concur. The FAA does not consider it appropriate to include various provisions in an AD applicable to a single operator's unique use of its airplanes. Paragraph (d) of this AD provides for the approval of alternative methods of compliance to address these types of unique circumstances. Further, this commenter does not compile sufficient data for each of its airplanes so that an individual airplane's age and inspection requirements can be adequately evaluated.

One commenter requests that the reporting requirement in proposed paragraph (b)(4) be revised to clarify that ''all inspection results (negative or positive)'' includes reporting the results of findings of discrepancies. The FAA does not concur. Section 2 of Volume III–94 of the SID provides detailed instructions for reporting the results of all inspection findings, including findings of discrepancies.

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 as proposed.

There are approximately 419 Model DC–10 series airplanes and KC–10A (military) airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. The FAA estimates that 249 airplanes of U.S. registry and 13 U.S. operators will be affected by this AD.

The incorporation of the SID program into an operator's maintenance program, as required by AD 93–17–09, takes approximately 1,270 work hours (per operator), at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost to the 13 affected U.S. operators to incorporate the SID program is estimated to be $990,600.

The incorporation of the revised procedures in this AD action will take approximately 20 additional work hours per operator to accomplish, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost to the 13 affected U.S. operators to incorporate these revised procedures into the SID program into an operator's maintenance program is estimated to be $15,600, or $1,200 per operator.

The recurring inspection costs, as required by AD 93–17–09, are estimated to be 365 work hours per airplane per year, at an average labor rate of $60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the recurring inspection costs required by AD 93–17–09 are estimated to be $21,900 per airplane, or $5,453,100 for the affected U.S. fleet.

Since no new recurring inspection procedures have been added to the program by this new AD action, there is no additional economic burden on affected operators to perform any additional recurrent inspections.