Models	Serial Nos.
PA31P-350	31P-8414001 through
PA31T	31T-7400002 through 31T-8120104
PA31T1	31T-7804001 through 31T-8304003 and 31T-1104004 through 31T- 1104017
PA31T2	31T-8166001 through 31T-8166076 and 31T-1166001 through 31T- 1166008.

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 (g) 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 in the body of this AD, unless already accomplished.

To prevent the MLG from retracting because of a cracked MLG forward side brace, which, if not detected and corrected, could result in gear collapse and loss of control of the airplane during landing operations, accomplish the following:

(a) Within the next 100 hours time-inservice (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished (compliance with AD 88–05–05), and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 100 hours TIS until the modification required by paragraph (c) or (d) of this AD is incorporated, inspect (using dye penetrant methods) both the left and right MLG sidebrace for cracks. Accomplish the inspections in accordance with the INSTRUCTIONS section of Piper Service Bulletin No. 845A, dated October 9, 1987.

(b) The initial dye penetrant inspection type must be utilized for all future repetitive inspections. Dye penetrant inspection types consist of Type I: fluorescent; Type II: nonfluorescent or visible dye; and Type III: dual sensitivity.

(c) If cracks are found during any of the inspections required in paragraph (a) of this AD, prior to further flight, replace the cracked MLG sidebrace with a part of improved design, P/N 85165–02 (left) or 85165–03 (right) or P/N 85166–02 (left) or 85166–03 (right), as applicable. Accomplish this replacement in accordance with the applicable maintenance manual.

(d) Within the next 1,200 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD, unless already accomplished as required by paragraph (c) of this AD, replace both the left and right MLG side brace with parts of improved design, P/N 85165–02 (left) and 85165–03 (right) or P/N 85166–02 (left) and 85166–03 (right), as applicable. Accomplish these replacements in accordance with the applicable maintenance manual.

(e) Installing both the left and right MLG side brace with parts of improved design, P/N 85165–02 (left) and 85165–03 (right) or P/N 85166–02 (left) and 85166–03 (right), as applicable, as required by paragraph (d) of this AD is considered terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirement of this AD.

(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) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the initial or repetitive compliance times that provides an equivalent level of safety may be approved by the Manager, Atlanta Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), Campus Building, 1701 Columbia Avenue, suite 2–160, College Park, Georgia 30337–2748. The request shall be forwarded through an appropriate FAA Maintenance Inspector, who may add comments and then send it to the Manager, Atlanta ACO.

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

Note 3: Alternative methods of compliance approved in accordance with AD 88–05–05 (superseded by this AD) are not considered approved for this AD.

(h) All persons affected by this directive may obtain copies of the document referred to herein upon request to The New Piper Aircraft, Inc., 2926 Piper Drive, Vero Beach, Florida 32960; or may examine this document at the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

(i) This amendment supersedes AD 88–05–05, Amendment 39–5861.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on December 1, 1995.

John R. Colomy,

Acting Manager, Small Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 90-CE-63-AD]

Airworthiness Directives; The New Piper Aircraft, Inc. (Formerly Piper Aircraft Corporation) Models PA31, PA31–300, PA31–325, and PA31–350 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT. **ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 80–14–06, which currently requires the following on The New Piper Aircraft, Inc. (Piper) Models PA31, PA31-300, PA31-325, and PA31-350 airplanes: repetitively inspecting the outboard flap tracks, wing rib flanges, and the rear spar web at Wing Station (WS) 147.5 on each wing, and modifying the area at WS 147.5 on both wings if any cracks are found as terminating action for the repetitive inspection requirement. The Federal Aviation Administration's policy on aging commuter-class aircraft is to eliminate or, in certain instances, reduce the number of certain repetitive short-interval inspections when improved parts or modifications are available. The proposed action would retain the current repetitive inspections contained in AD 80-14-06, and would require modifying the area at WS 147.5 on both wings as terminating action for the repetitive inspections. The actions specified in the proposed AD are intended to prevent structural failure under certain load conditions caused by cracked areas at WS 147.5, which, if not