



## UPDATE FROM UNION LEADERSHIP

NOVEMBER 13, 2019



### **MAX Update**

As you know, Southwest has taken the MAX out of our schedule until March. There has been a lot of confusing news regarding when the MAX will be ungrounded, the amount and type of training required, and when and how the MAX will return to revenue service.

The FAA is still reviewing Boeing's compliance documentation and conducting tests associated with the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System (MCAS) software update. During a simulated flight test this past summer of a theoretically possible, but remote, Flight Control Computer (FCC) fault condition, FAA Pilots determined that the Pilot actions exceeded the assumption on which the System Safety Assessment (SSA) was based. Boeing is now further upgrading the flight control system software to address this issue.

We believe these issues are the source for speculation about requiring simulator training for the Return to Service (RTS) and the discussion of a split fleet requirement. We do not think, at this time, simulator training for the RTS will be required, nor will NG and MAX fleets be split based on the information we have presently. However, the above-mentioned FCC changes are not interchangeable between the NG and MAX FCCs (they are made by different manufacturers). Since those changes have not been finalized, the simulator training and split fleet requirement issues remain open, however remote.

The Joint Operations Evaluation Board (JOEB) will assess the above information as well as evaluate the technical performance and human factors with a group of industry Pilots, to which Southwest has been included. The FAA has specified certain requirements for these test subjects, one being that 50% of the crews be from foreign airlines. To date, we have not been notified of when that evaluation will occur.

The outcome of the JOEB assessment will be documented in the Flight Standardization Board (FSB) report, which will be available for public review and comment before it is finalized. In addition, the DOT Special Committee to Review FAA's Aircraft Certification Process established by Secretary Elaine Chao to review the FAA's procedures for the certification of new aircraft, at which SWAPA presented, is expected this month.

Boeing is increasingly publicizing that they may have to shut down their production line due to running out of room to store completed MAX aircraft. There is some concern that this is simply another tactic to push the RTS timeline up, force operators to resume making payments on MAX aircraft, and transfer some costs, logistics, and responsibilities of storing and restoring the MAX to revenue service to respective operators.

Last week, in a letter sent to FAA Administrator Steve Dickson, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure inquired about MAX rudder cable protection from an uncontained engine failure. That letter can be [found here](#). You can expect more questions like this to be asked as more information is discovered and pulled from Boeing. As the FAA is still working with foreign regulators to orchestrate a collective MAX RTS, all of this may affect the timeline adversely.

Boeing will never, and should not ever, be given the benefit of the doubt again. The combination of arrogance, ignorance, and greed should and will haunt Boeing for eternity. I strongly concur with Southwest exploring obtaining a different and perhaps non-Boeing aircraft for the best interest of all our futures.

**Leading Forward,**

**Jon**