



Monthly Update and Reminders
DECEMBER 2019

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HOT ITEMS

December is one of the months that you can make changes to your pass travel selections for enrolled friends. June is the other month. The applicable section from the United website has been reproduced below for your review.

Pass travel enrollment for retirees

Just a reminder, the closing dates for pass enrollment are DIFFERENT for Active and Retirees.

RETIREE pass enrollment closes on DEC 29 @ 11:59 pm Central time

ACTIVE pass enrollment closes on DEC 30 @ 7:00pm Central time (1900 CT)

As an eligible retiree, instead of only being able to change your enrolled friend(s) once per year, you have the opportunity to change your enrolled friends twice a year. Retirees will continue to have up to two active enrolled friends at one time, but this change will allow you to [register](#) up to four enrolled friends within a calendar year – up to two friends during each of two different travel periods (see [travel](#) periods below).

**You can make changes to your enrolled friends for the
January through June 2020 travel period
through December 29 (until 11:59 p.m. CT)**

To get started, go to the [Dependent Management System](#) and select the "Manage Election" link in the Action column next to any of your enrolled friends.

Sample image:

What you can do:

- [Choose](#) the names of your enrolled friends(s) for the January through June travel period, from a list of current and inactive pass riders
- **Uncheck** a current enrolled friend to leave a slot empty on January 1, so you can add someone later
- **Add** a new enrolled friend to an available empty slot to be eligible for travel starting January 1

No changes? No action.

If you don't want to make any changes, you do not need to take any action. Current enrolled friends will automatically roll over to the next travel period, just like your spouse/domestic partner, children and parents do. Keep in mind that once a new travel period begins, your current enrolled friends can be removed but cannot be replaced within the same travel period.

Travel periods

The calendar year for pass travel enrollment for retirees is broken into two travel periods, January 1 – June 30 and July 1 – December 31.

You can select enrolled friends at any time before the next travel period by going to the [Dependent Management System](#) and selecting the "Manage Election" link in the Action column (see sample image above).

Friendly Reminders

Know your friends. If you are providing enrolled friend status to individuals who are not your family members they must be your own close, personal friends; enrolled friend status cannot be sold or bartered.

Names must match. Your enrolled friends' names must match exactly to what appears on their travel documents, i.e. driver's license or passport.

Invoices for tax withholdings. Any federal and state withholding taxes that apply to your taxable pass travel income will be collected via quarterly invoices. Failure to pay an invoice may result in a suspension of your pass travel privileges until the invoice is paid. See [W-2 pass travel tax reporting](#) to learn more.

Be sure your mailing address is up to date. If you need to make a change, use the "Update Mailing Address" link in the Detail Summary section of the [Dependent Management System](#) page. Note: you will be redirected to the Your Benefits Resources website to enter your changes. See page 6 of the [W-2 pass travel tax reporting and billing user](#) guide to learn more.

Sample image:

Helpful resources and contact information

- [Read a user guide \(pdf\)](#) with step-by-step instructions on how to elect your enrolled friend(s) for the next travel period
- Still need assistance? Contact the Employee Travel Center:
 - Use [Help Hub](#) to submit an inquiry and track the progress of your request
 - Call 1-877-UAL-ESC9 (from the U.S.) or 1-847-UAL-ESC9 (outside the U.S.)
 - Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Central Time, 7 days a week
 - Say "employee travel" then "travel questions" to speak to a representative

Questions and Answers

[I elected to have empty slots available but cannot register a new enrolled friend. Why?](#)

If you have four (4) or more enrolled friends on your profile (active or inactive), you must remove one (1) or more inactive enrolled friends from your travel profile prior to registering your new enrolled friend(s).

Steps:

1. Go to the [Dependent Management System](#)
2. Click on the purple "i" information icon next to the enrolled friend with an **inactive** status
3. Click Remove Dependent from the Detail Summary section
4. Click Save

[My current enrolled friend is taking a space available trip in June and returning in August. Can they travel in August if I did not elect them for the next travel period?](#)

No. Current enrolled friend's space available travel must be completed by the end of the current travel period if you did not elect them for the next travel period.

[My child is turning 26 later this year. Can I change my current enrolled friend after my child's birthday to be able to register them as an enrolled friend?](#)

No. Once the travel period begins, no changes can be made to current enrolled friends. We recommend taking action by electing to have a slot empty to be able to register your child as an enrolled friend after their 26th birthday.

[When I register my enrolled friend, does their name have to match how it appears on their identification?](#)

Yes. Your enrolled friend's names must match exactly to what appears on their travel documents, i.e. driver's license or passport.

[If I removed my current enrolled friend, when does their travel eligibility end?](#)

If you clicked on the purple "i" information icon and selected the Remove Dependent link, your enrolled friend's travel eligibility is valid through midnight and cannot be replaced within the

same travel period.

If you used the Manage Election link and unchecked your current enrolled friend, their travel eligibility is valid through the end of the current travel period.

[Why does my new enrolled friend for the upcoming travel period have a grey check mark?](#)

The grey check mark indicates future travel eligibility. The check mark will turn to green when the new travel period begins.

To view a video about this process, you can go to the FlyingTogether website at ft.ual.com, Travel, Programs and Policies, Retiree Pass Travel, then click on the link in the 2nd paragraph "Pass Travel enrollment for retirees page". The link below should take you there. The video prompt is at the bottom of the page.

<https://ft.ual.com/travel/passriderslandingpage/retireepasstravel/pass-travel-enrollment-for-retirees>

Recurring and New Reminders

December 31, (*that's the end of this month*) is the due date for **2020 dues**. After that you have until the end of April to pay to avoid being removed from all Golden Eagles communications. (But then you all knew that!) Our Treasurer, Bruce Sprague **would like reiterate that we REALLY do not want checks (that INCLUDES bank bill pay checks), and to please use our STORE!** Bruce has to do a lot of extra work when he receives a *check* for any payments to the Golden Eagles. *Word is he grits his teeth and yells at his dog a lot when he gets checks for dues payments!*

The member **rosters** have been updated and published in the Golden Eagles website, www.thegoldeneagles.org. Check your contact info and let us know if there are any errors.

The current **password** for accessing the Golden Contrails magazine, the member rosters, the archived blast emails and the officers documents is **acars**

The Golden Eagles volunteer officers want to wish all our members and their families Happy Holidays, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



President, Tom Doherty



President Elect and Magazine editor, Gary Small



Executive Vice President and Email Co-ordinator, Dave Newell



Secretary, David Rossetter



Treasurer and Webmaster, Bruce Sprague



Membership Chairman, Mark Sheprow



Pass Travel Chairman and Social Media Coordinator, Jim Morehead



Past President, Bill Chambers



Ladies Auxiliary President, Jamie Doherty

CONVENTION NEWS

We will mention the convention coming up next May 14-17 in each monthly update just to keep it fresh in whatever is left of our minds. ☐ Our President Tom Doherty has expended a lot of time and effort to arrange the convention venue at the Doubletree by Hilton Denver adjacent to the old Stapleton airport location **on May 14-17, 2020**. We very much appreciate all the effort Tom and Jamie put into organizing our conventions.

This year we plan on publishing a list of those planning to attend the convention so you can see who will be available to buy you a drink! ☐☐ Normally the bulk of those attending make their reservations near the cutoff date for the hotel and the banquet, but we hope more of you will make your reservations early so we can provide an up-to-date list of those attending and better plan the activities. Remember to ask your friends to attend the convention/reunion "so they will be able to see you again!" ☐

PASS TRAVEL NEWS

FAQ

Fee for UADiscount ticket change

I bought my son's tkt on 20% discount. Is there a \$75 charge if he wants to standby on earlier flt?

Yes. All rules apply as per normal ticketing.

Use the kiosk it will tell him if there is a fee or not - but most tickets have a fee for changes even standby/Rebooking delayed UADiscount ticket

UADiscount ticket rebooking

If your flight is delayed will United rebook a 20% ticket?

Yes - 20% are revenue customers

Missed connecting flight on 20% discount ticket

If you buy a employee discount ticket that requires a connecting flight to get to your destination, and your first flight is delayed and you are not going to be on time for your second flight, do you get rebooked on the next flight available as a revenue customer is?

- **Yes, absolutely**
- **Yes. You're not standby.**

Refund for UADiscount ticket

How do you get a refund for a myUA discount travel ticket? I just booked it last night and found a better deal on another airline!

If its within 24 hours you go into the reservation and cancel it.

Basic Economy baggage allowance

Just would like to confirm please. Basic economy tickets bought with the the 20% discount program. Can check two bags under 70 pounds at the ticket counter free? With one small carry on. Is that the correct? I thought it was one bag. So I am just confirming for my kids that they can check 2 bags.

2 bags up to 70 pounds is correct. (Regular economy ticket is 2 carry-ons, one for the overhead and one under seat or if you bought basic economy then only one carry-on for under the seat)

All that info you can find in the reservation, and I always make and take a paper copy with me ☐☐☐

It saves me about \$70 for both my kids buying a basic economy ticket. So I thought I might give that a try. And they'll be there at the airport in plenty of time to check their bags at the counter.

UADiscount for lap child

Trying to buy 2 UADISCOUNT tickets for my 2 enrolled friends. They have a lap child (5 month old) with them, my grandson. I put in 3 travelers when I search for the tickets, 2 adults and 1 lap. However, when i try to buy the ticket I don't have a name in my profile for the lap. When I try to complete the purchase an error screen comes up. How do I add the infant, or do I even have to

- **If its domestic I wouldn't worry about the lap child... call reservations later to add him or they can add him at airport. You actually do the booking for two enrolled friends for domestic travel and add the lap child during the check in 24 hours before flight.**
- **Yes leave lap off until you get to check in at airport**

Direct Flight vs non-stop flight

What is the difference between a direct and a non-stop flight.

A direct flight is a flight where the flight number does not change with more than one stop en-route to the final destination. A non-stop flight is a flight that does not stop at other stations en-route to the final destination.

LAC NEWS

HOUSTON AREA GATHERING (all three Houston

area LACs converge):

All three local LACs (Conroe, Kingwood and The Woodlands groups) meet every **quarter** for **lunch** at the Conroe **Wings N More** (16580 I-45 S, Conroe, TX 77384). This makes for a huge get-together for guys (and gals) who you have not seen for years! Not to be missed.....stick this on your calendar!

The current schedule is:

Conroe Pilots Lunch 11:30 am

Conroe Wings N More (16580 I-45 S, Conroe, TX 77384)

Monday, December 2, 2019

Monday, March 2, 2020

Monday, June 1, 2020

Monday, August 3, 2020

Monday, November 2, 2020

Hill Country LAC Quarterly Luncheon

The San Antonio/Austin (Hill Country LAC) Golden Eagles members will hold their quarterly luncheon in Johnson City, Texas at the Pecan Street Brewery at 1130 am, Wednesday, January 15. Guests are welcome and if you are in the area please join us for good food and drink and a chance to visit with old and new friends.

AIRLINE NEWS

Boeing's fix tames the 'tiger' in the 737 MAX flight controls, say experts and critics

Nov. 17, 2019 at 6:00 am



Dozens of Boeing 737 MAXs are stored on parking ramps at the airport at Moses Lake. These are among 192 of the jets parked at Moses Lake, all built since the plane was grounded in March.

By

[Dominic Gates](#)

Seattle Times aerospace reporter

After months of intense scrutiny, even some of the harshest critics of the 737 MAX's flight-control system believe Boeing's software fix will prevent a recurrence of the scenarios that killed 346 people in the crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia.

Boeing has redesigned the MAX's new automated [Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System \(MCAS\)](#) that relentlessly pushed down the noses of the two aircraft on both crash flights. Though serious questions linger about the overall safety culture at Boeing that waved through MCAS's original development and certification, U.S. airline pilots are almost ready to fly the updated jet.

"The hazard is designed out of it," Capt. John DeLeeuw, chairman of the safety committee of the Allied Pilots Association (APA), the union for American Airlines pilots, declared to colleagues a week after trying the flight-control fix in a Boeing simulator in Miami in late September.



RELATED

[Two tragic flights, 12 problems on the Boeing 737 MAX](#)

Bjorn Fehrm, an aerospace engineer and former fighter pilot in the Swedish Air Force, now a France-based aviation analyst with [Leeham.net](#), has said Boeing's original MCAS design was "criminally badly done ... unforgivable," and compared the system's aggressiveness to a tiger. He too believes the redesign now makes the airplane as safe as the previous 737 model.

"There's no part of any airplane out there that's been as thoroughly vetted," said Fehrm. "MCAS is no longer a tiger, but a house cat."

The final pieces of that vetting are now imminent.

Boeing expects the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to formally unground the jet next month and to pin down all the pilot training requirements in January.

HIGHLY RESPECTED AVIATION EXPERTS CRITICAL OF LION AIR PILOTS AND CRASH REPORT

By

[Geoffrey Thomas](#)

November 24,
2019



Photo: Lion Air

Former NTSB crash investigator is highly critical of the Indonesian NTSC report and the primary conclusion that the MCAS [software](#) caused the crash of LionAir Flight 610 in October last year.

Well known, former NTSB crash investigator and air safety expert Greg Feith, says the Indonesian NTSC 322-page report, issued last month, into the LionAir 737MAX tragedy presents an in-depth [account](#) of the "factual" information developed during the course of the investigation.

However, Feith says of the report, "there are so many flaws in logic, failures to properly analyze the facts, and failures to hold persons or organizations accountable and much more. They (NTSC) obviously reverse-engineered the "facts" to support their preconceived conclusions that the airplane and MCAS are to blame," said Mr Feith.



"The NTSC stated the pilots, especially the First Officer, had significant training deficiencies and lacked basic flying skills. These same deficiencies occurred during the accident flight. These two pilots had no business being in the cockpit and the airplane should not have been operated because of all the maintenance issues that began at the beginning of October, and were not corrected, making the airplane unairworthy."

Feith questions the NTSC's silence regarding "the oversight by the Indonesian DGCA and the accountability of LionAir, especially after the airline had several serious incidents and accidents in the past 6 years.

[READ Boeing says MAX deliveries could start in December.](#)

Mr Feith's views are supported by a well-respected Airbus training captain, who told AirlineRatings.com the first officer "could not fly".

"The report on the FO is an eye-opener as he is constantly very poor in all phases of operating an aircraft," the training captain said.

"The report indicates a lot of additional training in standard operating procedures and emergencies and this was repeated on almost every subsequent training session but the problems were never resolved.

"There is a continual mention of a very poor instrument scan which was also never resolved. Even more deeply troubling was that, according to the pilot reports, the first officer didn't understand and had difficulty handling aerodynamic stalls, a fundamental of flying."

"That FO could not fly and I wonder why the Lion Air trainers didn't cull him as his performance at proficiency checks are all fail items."

That assessment is supported by one of the world's leading flight crew trainers, who told Airline Ratings.com "it would appear that much had been overlooked in [order](#) to keep the FO operational".

He said the captain had his issues, too, and asks why the two margin pilots were put together. "While there are 'green-on-green' restrictions for the pairing of flight crew with respect to time on type (of plane), this accident makes a compelling case against pairing marginal performing pilots together as well," he said.

Both the captain and first officer acted as the pilot flying on the fatal flight and the FO was in command when it crashed.

The Digital Flight [Data](#) Recorder revealed that the inputs (to correct the nose down pitch from MCAS) from the FO were weaker than the captains, who seemed to have some control over the aircraft.

Why the captain didn't take back control of the 737 is a mystery.

Earlier this month a panel of US government flight-safety experts, the Technical Advisory Board, said that Boeing's redesign of the 737 MAX complied with regulations and was "safe".

The Technical Advisory Board, created after the 737 MAX jet was grounded in March has just presented its preliminary report to the FAA. The TAB is made up of aviation experts from the US Air Force, the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, NASA and FAA.

And US and Europe regulators said the 737 crashes are a watershed for the industry and that previous assumptions on pilot competency have to be re-evaluated for all new designs.

BOEING SAYS MAX DELIVERIES COULD RESUME IN DECEMBER

By

[Steve Creedy](#)



November 12, 2019

Boeing

Photo:

US aerospace giant Boeing says deliveries of its beleaguered 737 MAX aircraft could resume in December but it now does not expect a return to commercial service until January.

The manufacturer until recently had stuck by its assumption there would be a return to service in the fourth quarter but that seemed increasingly unrealistic after major US airlines Southwest and American took the aircraft out of their schedule until March.

[READ: Boeing 737 MAX safe says panel of experts.](#)

Boeing continues to work closely with the [US Federal Aviation Administration](#) on getting the aircraft back in the air and on Monday outlined the progress it had made so far

"While the FAA and other regulatory authorities will determine the timing of certification and return to commercial service, Boeing continues to target FAA certification of the MAX flight control [software](#) updates during this quarter," Boeing said in a statement.

"Based on this schedule, it is possible that the resumption of MAX deliveries to airline customers could begin in December, after certification, when the FAA issues an Airworthiness

Directive rescinding the grounding [order](#).

"In parallel, we are working towards final validation of the [updated](#) training requirements, which must occur before the MAX returns to commercial service, and which we now expect to begin in January."

The manufacturer, which says it is confident the MAX will emerge from the process as "one of the safest airplanes ever to fly", outlined five key milestones it needs to complete before a return to service.

It said the first of these — an eCAB simulator certification session — was completed in the past week and it was working with the FAA towards a line pilots test crew workload evaluation and an FAA certification flight test.

The multi-day eCab simulator evaluation with the FAA ensured the overall software system performs its intended function, both normally and in the presence of system failures.

The FAA line pilots crew workload evaluation is a separate, multi-day simulator session with airline pilots to assess human factors and crew workload under various test conditions.

The crucial FAA certification flight test will see administration pilots conduct a certification flight or flights of the final updated software.

After the flight test, the final product will be submitted to the FAA for certification and a multi-regulatory body, the Joint Operational Evaluation board, will conduct simulator sessions over several days using global regulatory pilots to validate training requirements.

This will see the Flight Standardization Board release a report for a public comment period, followed by final approval of the training.

"At each step of this process Boeing has worked closely with the FAA and other regulators," Boeing said.

"We're providing detailed documentation, had them fly in the simulators, and helped them understand our logic and the design for the new procedures, software and proposed training material to ensure that they are completely satisfied as to the airplane's safety.

"The FAA and other regulatory authorities will ultimately determine return to service in each relevant jurisdiction. This may include a phased approach and timing may vary by jurisdiction."

The European regulator, EASA, has said it does not expect to give the aircraft the green light until some weeks after the FAA.

Boeing quietly unveiled a new version of the 737 Max, even though it is still grounded around the world

[Will Martin](#)



Boeing's newest jet, the 737 Max 10, which it quietly unveiled at its headquarters last week. Boeing

- Boeing quietly unveiled a new version of its troubled 737 Max aircraft on Friday, even as the plane remains grounded globally after two deadly crashes.
- At a low-key ceremony at its headquarters in Renton, Washington, attended mainly by employees, Boeing released the 737 Max 10, the largest version of the Max yet.
- The Max 10 is Boeing's competition to the Airbus A321 XLR, which was one of the stars of last week's Dubai Airshow. Airlines ordered \$5.7 billion worth of the A321 XLR at the show.

NTSB says Boeing should redesign the engine housing on its 737 jets, which was partly to blame for a deadly Southwest accident

[David Slotnick](#)

Nov 19, 2019, 2:01 PM



In this Tuesday, April 17, 2018 photo, a National Transportation Safety Board investigator examines damage to the engine of the Southwest Airlines plane that made an emergency landing at Philadelphia International Airport in Philadelphia. NTSB via AP

- [Boeing](#) should redesign the cowling that covers the engines on its [737 NG aircraft](#), the National Transportation Safety Board said Tuesday.
- The NTSB report closed the investigation into Southwest Flight 1380, which suffered an in-flight engine failure in April 2018. The engine came apart, killing a passenger when debris struck the plane's body.
- The redesign and replacement could represent a significant cost to Boeing. The crash and the report is unrelated to the [737 Max](#) scandal.

Federal transportation safety investigators said that Boeing should redesign the engine housing on its 737 New Generation (NG) planes, following a deadly catastrophe on Southwest flight 1380 in April of last year.

One passenger died after an engine fan blade broke on the Southwest flight from New York's La Guardia Airport to Dallas Love Field. The fan caused the engine housing to break apart — a piece of debris hit the body of the 737-700 and broke a window, causing the cabin to rapidly lose pressure.

Passenger Jennifer Riordan was killed after she was partially sucked out the window, and eight other passengers had minor injuries. The plane made an emergency landing in Philadelphia.

In a report ending a 19 month investigation into the crash, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) called on Boeing to redesign the engine cowling — the removable cover of the engine — to better contain debris if an internal piece breaks in the future.

There are about 7,000 737 NG planes that have been delivered to customers since the plane type was introduced in the late-1990s. The NTSB called on Boeing and the plane's operators to retrofit all existing planes with the newly designed part.

Notably, however, the board did not fault the original design process of the engine.

It instead focused on reconsidering the process of designing the engine to withstand internal impacts during "fan blade out," or FBO, failures, since the fan blade broke and struck the nacelle in way that was different than Boeing and the engine maker, CFM International, expected.

Engines are designed to contain parts in event of a failure. While it did so during the Southwest flight, the engine cowling broke off as the fan blade rattled against the engine.

The NTSB did not recommend grounding the planes, and noted that airlines are inspecting the fan blades of similar CFM56-7B engines more frequently following the accident.

The board also noted that there have only been two reported failures of the engine type, despite there being 14,600 CFM56-7B engines in service, with a total of 365,000 fan blades and 400 million flight cycles over 20 years.

The recommendations are not immediately binding unless the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) implements them as directives. However, a spokesperson for Boeing told the Dallas Morning News that the company was already working on "enhancements to the 737 NG cowls."

"Boeing is committed to working closely with the FAA, engine manufacturers, and industry stakeholders to implement enhancements that address the NTSB's safety recommendations," the spokesperson said.

The report comes as Boeing works with the FAA and airlines to determine an inspection and repair schedule to find and fix cracks in the "pickle fork" on 737 NG planes. The pickle fork, a section that reinforces where the planes' wing meets the body, has been found to have developed cracks on 50 planes globally with 20,000 flight hours or more — fewer hours than expected before cracks would develop.

Boeing, regulators, and airlines [maintain](#) that there is no safety risk involved. The planes are designed to fly even with damage to the pickle fork thanks to redundant safety features, according to Stephen Fankhauser, a Swinburne University of Technology aviation expert in Australia [who was cited by AFP](#).

The pickle fork issue on the 737 NGs is unrelated to the ongoing crisis surrounding the 737 Max, the newer generation of the workhorse jet. The Boeing 737 NG — which includes the 737-600, -700, -800, and -900 variants — is a backbone of commercial fleets around the world, with more than 7,000 sold.

The fuselage of the 777X ground test airplane was split by a high-pressure rupture during a test on Sept. 5. With the wings bent upward and the interior at maximum pressure.



By
[Dominic Gates](#)
Seattle Times aerospace reporter

Boeing got an unexpected jolt in September when engineers in Everett put the new 777X airframe through an extreme test of its structural strength. Just as the test approached its target stress level, an explosive depressurization tore through the fuselage.

Boeing has kept the details secret, but photos obtained by the Seattle Times show that the extent of the damage was greater than previously disclosed and earlier reports were wrong about crucial details.

The test plane is a complete write-off, its fuselage skin ripped wide open just behind the wing. A passenger door that blew out and fell to the factory floor was a secondary impact of the initial rupture, which was located far below the door.

The relatively good news for Boeing is that because the test failed so explosively at just 1% shy of meeting federal requirements, it will almost certainly not have to do a retest. Regulators will likely allow it to prove by analysis that it's enough to reinforce the fuselage in the localized area where it failed.

Asked for comment, Boeing said in a statement Tuesday that while it has not yet completed a detailed analysis of the incident, "what we've seen to date reinforces our prior assessment that this will not have a significant impact on the design or our preparations for first flight."



Boeing spokesman Paul Bergman said the test result won't add to the program delays already caused by problems in development of the jet's GE9X engine. He said the 777X should still fly for the first time in early 2020 and the first will be delivered to an airline in 2021.

Wings bent up, fuselage bent down

The test conducted that day was the final test of this airplane, which was fixed in a test rig inside the Everett factory specifically to be stressed close to destruction. The jet was surrounded by scaffolding and multiple orange weights hung from the airframe. Wires were [hooked](#) to instrumentation that studded the surface to measure every [stress](#) and deflection, the data monitored in real time by engineers sitting at control room computers.

As the test neared its climax, weighted pulleys had bent the jet's giant carbon composite wings upward more than 28 feet from their resting position. That's far beyond the expected maximum deflection in normal flight of about 9 feet, according to a person familiar with the details.

At the same time, the fuselage was bent downward at the extreme front and aft ends with millions of pounds of force. And the interior of the plane was pressurized beyond normal levels to about 10 pounds per square inch — not typically a requirement for this test, but something Boeing chose to do.

All this simulated the loads in a flight maneuver where a pilot would experience a force of 3.75 G, compared to the maximum of 1.3 G in normal flight.

The combination of the bending forces on the wing and fuselage created a high compression load on the bottom centerline of the fuselage — the keel — according to the person, who asked for anonymity because the details are sensitive.

Federal certification regulations require engineers to ratchet up the forces until they reach "ultimate load" — defined as 1.5 times the "limit load," which is the maximum that would ever be experienced in normal flight — and hold it there for at least three seconds.

When Boeing tested the original 777 model in 1995, it kept going until the aluminum wings snapped at 1.54 times limit load. On the 787, it chose to stop at 1.5 and then ease the composite wings back down again. Breaking a pair of composite wings could result in release of unhealthy fibers in the air, so it's likely that with the 777X also having composite wings, that was the plan again this time.

But as Boeing personnel along with six FAA observers watched from the windows of a control room, at 1.48 times limit load — 99% of ultimate load — the structure gave way. Under the center fuselage, just aft of the wing and the well where the landing gear wheels are stowed, the extreme compression load caused the plane's aluminum skin to buckle and

rupture, according to the person familiar with the details.

The resulting depressurization was explosive enough that workers in the next bay heard it clearly. One worker said he heard "a loud boom, and the ground shook."

Delivered weeknights, this email newsletter gives you a quick recap of the day's top stories and need-to-know news, as well as intriguing photos and topics to spark conversation as you wind down from your day.

That then caused secondary damage: The photos show that the fuselage skin split part of the way up the side of the airplane, along with areas of bent and twisted structure that extended through the area around a passenger door.

A day after the incident, based on incomplete information, [The Seattle Times and other media outlets incorrectly reported that a cargo door had blown out](#).

Unlike the plane's cargo doors, which hinge outward, the passenger doors on airliners are plug-type doors that only open inward and are larger than the hole they close. But the structure around that passenger door just aft of the 777X wing was so damaged that the pressure blew the door out and it fell to the floor.

These secondary damage sites — the rip up the side of the fuselage, the door blown out — alarming as they might seem, are not a concern to air safety engineers. "The doors were not a precipitating factor," said the person familiar with the details.

It's the initiating failure, the weakness in that localized area of the keel, that Boeing must now fix.

Yet the fix is very unlikely to require a retest.

A safety engineer at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), speaking anonymously without permission from the agency, said that because the blowout happened so close to the target load, it barely counts as a failure.

Boeing will have so much data gathered on the way to the 99% stage that it can now compare with its [computer](#) models to analyze the failure precisely, the FAA engineer said. It can then reinforce the weak area, and prove by analysis that that's sufficient to cover the extra 1%.

The engineer said it's not that unusual to find a vulnerability when taking an airplane structure to the edge of destruction.

"The good news is they found it and can address it," the FAA engineer said. "They found a problem they can fix. They can beef up the structure based on analysis."

FAA spokesman Lynn Lunsford said the safety agency is continuing conversations with Boeing about how the 777X can meet requirements after the test failure.

"The FAA requires manufacturers to meet design and certification standards," Lunsford said. "How they choose to do that is up to them."

Obituary: Phil Bakes, airline executive and Far & Wide co-founder

By [Sarah Feldberg](#)

Aug 10, 2016



Phil Bakes

Phil Bakes, the former executive at Continental and Eastern airlines and co-founder of tour operator company Far & Wide, died Aug. 3 at age 70 from a bone marrow disorder.

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[JOHN PLETZ](#)



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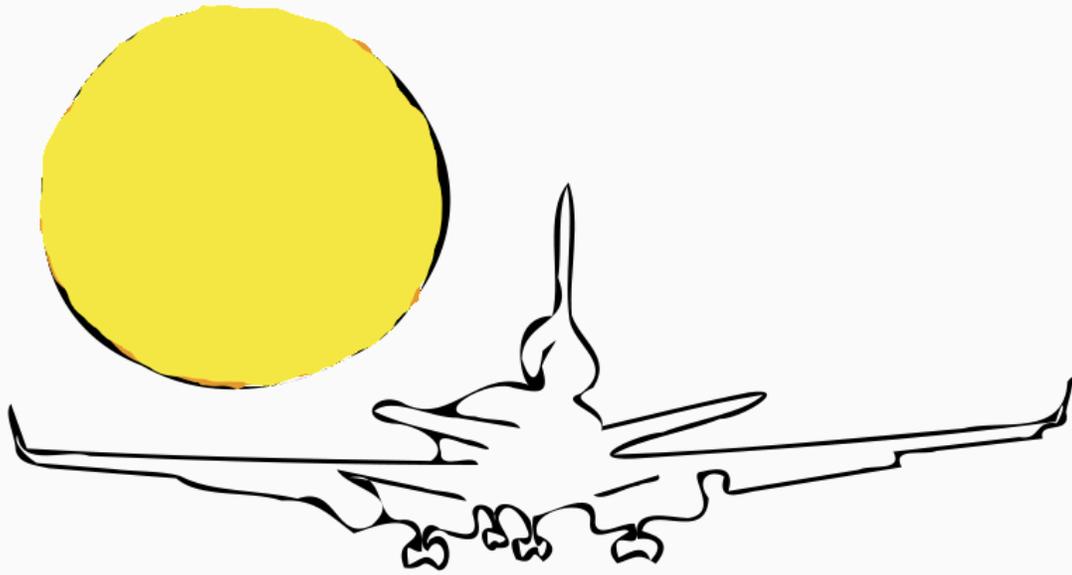
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I will be attending the Celebration of Life tomorrow in Fort Collins.

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GONE WEST - 2019

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| <b>Gene Chancy</b>      | <b>Nov 14, 2019</b> |
| <b>Chester James*</b>   | <b>Dec 6, 2019</b>  |
| <b>Jeff Burke*</b>      | <b>Dec 7, 2019</b>  |



That's all folks. See you next month around the 15th with another update.

Dave Newell  
EVP/Golden Eagles Email Liaison  
EVP\_EmailCoordinator@thegoldeneagles.org



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Boeing spokesman Paul Bergman said the test result won't add to the program delays already caused by problems in development of the jet's GE9X engine. He said the 777X should still fly for the first time in early 2020 and the first will be delivered to an airline in 2021.

#### **Wings bent up, fuselage bent down**

The test conducted that day was the final test of this airplane, which was fixed in a test rig inside the Everett factory specifically to be stressed close to destruction. The jet was surrounded by scaffolding and multiple orange weights hung from the airframe. Wires were [hooked](#) to instrumentation that studded the surface to measure every [stress](#) and deflection, the data monitored in real time by engineers sitting at control room computers.

As the test neared its climax, weighted pulleys had bent the jet's giant carbon composite wings upward more than 28 feet from their resting position. That's far beyond the expected maximum deflection in normal flight of about 9 feet, according to a person familiar with the details.

At the same time, the fuselage was bent downward at the extreme front and aft ends with millions of pounds of force. And the interior of the plane was pressurized beyond normal levels to about 10 pounds per square inch — not typically a requirement for this test, but something Boeing chose to do.

All this simulated the loads in a flight maneuver where a pilot would experience a force of 3.75 G, compared to the maximum of 1.3 G in normal flight.

The combination of the bending forces on the wing and fuselage created a high compression load on the bottom centerline of the fuselage — the keel — according to the person, who asked for anonymity because the details are sensitive.

Federal certification regulations require engineers to ratchet up the forces until they reach "ultimate load" — defined as 1.5 times the "limit load," which is the maximum that would ever be experienced in normal flight — and hold it there for at least three seconds.

When Boeing tested the original 777 model in 1995, it kept going until the aluminum wings snapped at 1.54 times limit load. On the 787, it chose to stop at 1.5 and then ease the composite wings back down again. Breaking a pair of composite wings could result in release of unhealthy fibers in the air, so it's likely that with the 777X also having composite wings, that was the plan again this time.

But as Boeing personnel along with six FAA observers watched from the windows of a control room, at 1.48 times limit load — 99% of ultimate load — the structure gave way. Under the center fuselage, just aft of the wing and the well where the landing gear wheels are stowed, the extreme compression load caused the plane's aluminum skin to buckle and rupture, according to the person familiar with the details.

The resulting depressurization was explosive enough that workers in the next bay heard it clearly. One worker said he heard "a loud boom, and the ground shook."

Delivered weeknights, this email newsletter gives you a quick recap of the day's top stories and need-to-know news, as well as intriguing photos and topics to spark conversation as you wind down from your day.

That then caused secondary damage: The photos show that the fuselage skin split part of the way up the side of the airplane, along with areas of bent and twisted structure that extended through the area around a passenger door.

A day after the incident, based on incomplete information, [The Seattle Times and other media outlets incorrectly reported that a cargo door had blown out](#).

Unlike the plane's cargo doors, which hinge outward, the passenger doors on airliners are plug-type doors that only open inward and are larger than the hole they close. But the structure around that passenger door just aft of the 777X wing was so damaged that the pressure blew the door out and it fell to the floor.

These secondary damage sites — the rip up the side of the fuselage, the door blown out — alarming as they might seem, are not a concern to air safety engineers. "The doors were not a precipitating factor," said the person familiar with the details.

It's the initiating failure, the weakness in that localized area of the keel, that Boeing must now fix.

Yet the fix is very unlikely to require a retest.

A safety engineer at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), speaking anonymously without permission from the agency, said that because the blowout happened so close to the target load, it barely counts as a failure.

Boeing will have so much data gathered on the way to the 99% stage that it can now compare with its [computer](#) models to analyze the failure precisely, the FAA engineer said. It can then reinforce the weak area, and prove by analysis that that's sufficient to cover the extra 1%.

The engineer said it's not that unusual to find a vulnerability when taking an airplane structure to the edge of destruction.

"The good news is they found it and can address it," the FAA engineer said. "They found a problem they can fix. They can beef up the structure based on analysis."

FAA spokesman Lynn Lunsford said the safety agency is continuing conversations with Boeing about how the 777X can meet requirements after the test failure.

"The FAA requires manufacturers to meet design and certification standards," Lunsford said. "How they choose to do that is up to them."

## Obituary: Phil Bakes, airline executive and Far & Wide co-founder

By [Sarah Feldberg](#)

Aug 10, 2016



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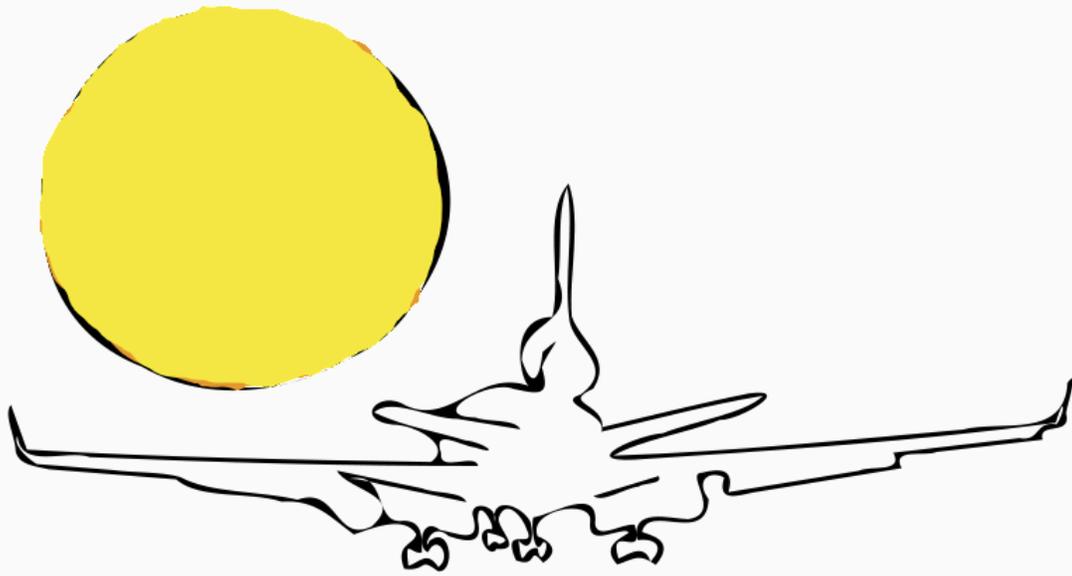
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