



Monthly Update and Reminders

MARCH 2020

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RECURRING AND NEW REMINDERS

Members who have not paid 2020 dues are now delinquent. We now have 25 members in that category. Even though the plan is to allow anyone paying the requisite \$35 in the future to enjoy the benefits of membership without further dues, those *members* paying AFTER April 30 will have been purged from the “active” communication list and will have to undergo the annoying process of resubscribing to our bulk mail provider. This is NOT easy on yours truly, so unless you are really wanting to “depart the pattern”, PLEASE GET THIS DONE ASAP or before April 30.

The current password for accessing the Golden Contrails, the Member Rosters and the Archived Blast Emails is **acars**. The **new password will be issued after May 1** and the current active members will be so advised at that time.

Can't remember if you have paid your dues for 2020? Remember you can find out by going to our website, www.thegoldeneagles.org, Membership, Roster, Roster Download, Full Data Roster. The date in the lower portion of the data block is the date through which you have paid your dues. Here is a link to help you get to the roster:

https://www.thegoldeneagles.org/uploads/4/5/2/4/45245885/fulldataroster_2020_03.pdf

The following notes are posted on the login page of the FlyingTogether website. Password help is under the login prompt and will provide instructions for resetting your password.

[Important notice](#) | [Login issues](#) is at the lower left side of the page. "Login issues" will provide a phone number for getting login assistance.

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Our President Elect Gary Small recently sent out a blast email to all present and past Golden Eagles members announcing the unanimous decision of the Executive Committee to institute a new business model for the Golden Eagles. In an effort to streamline the operation of the organization, proposals were made to make the management of the group simpler and more efficient. For the members at large, we also wanted to make the process of maintaining one's membership more user friendly. Eliminating our annual formal convention, the mailed hard copy of the Golden Contrails and the payment of dues are the cornerstones of the new business model. We will continue to support the concept of member gatherings for personal interaction and camaraderie, and will continue to provide enhanced communications within the Golden Eagles organization. The response from our members has been 100 percent supportive of the proposals, even though there has been the natural disappointment to the loss of our traditional convention gatherings to a more diverse, varied form of reunion gatherings. More details will be provided in the next issue of the Golden Contrails magazine and in other notices as we gradually introduce this new process.

Here are some good points to consider regarding the COVID 19 virus. This information was received from a member of the medical profession and was deemed worthy of sharing. Obviously there is a huge amount of hype about this virus, and it must be left to each individual's judgement as to how to perceive and react to the information out there, as with the information presented below.

Be careful out there, wash your hands and don't pick your nose!! ☐☐

The new Coronavirus may not show signs of infection for many days. How can one

know if someone is infected? By the time they have fever and/or cough and go to the hospital, the lung is usually 50% Fibrosis and it's too late. Taiwan experts provide a simple self-check that we can do every morning. Take a deep breath and hold your breath for more than 10 seconds. If you complete it successfully without coughing, without discomfort, stiffness or tightness, etc., it proves there is no Fibrosis in the lungs, basically indicates no infection. In critical time, please self-check every morning in an environment with clean air. Serious excellent advice by Japanese doctors treating COVID-19 cases: Everyone should ensure your mouth & throat are moist, never dry. Take a few sips of water every 15 minutes at least. Why? Even if the virus gets into your mouth, drinking water or other liquids will wash them down through your throat and into the stomach. Once there, your stomach acid will kill all the virus. If you don't drink enough water more regularly, the virus can enter your windpipe and into the lungs. That's very dangerous. Please send and share this with family and friends.

CORONAVIRUS

- 1. If you have a runny nose and sputum, you have a common cold.*
- 2. Coronavirus pneumonia is a dry cough with no runny nose.*
- 3. This new virus is not heat-resistant and will be killed by a temperature of just 26/27C degrees = (F 78-81). It hates the Sun.*
- 4. If someone sneezes with it, it takes about 10 feet before it drops to the ground and is no longer airborne.*
- 5. If it drops on a metal surface it will live for at least 12 hours (another source 3/12/20 emphasized 3 days on metal (stainless steel) and plastics)- so if you come into contact with any metal surface - wash your hands as soon as you can with a bacterial soap.*
- 6. On fabric it can survive for 6-12 hours. a normal laundry detergent will kill it.*
- 7. Drinking warm water is effective for all viruses. Try not to drink liquids with ice.*
- 8. Wash your hands frequently as the virus can only live on your hands for 5-10 minutes, but - a lot can happen during that time - you can rub your eyes, pick your nose unwittingly and so on.*
- 9. You should also gargle as a prevention. A simple solution of salt in warm water will suffice.*
- 10. Can't emphasize enough - drink plenty of water!*

THE SYMPTOMS

- 1. It will first infect the throat, so you'll have a sore throat lasting 3/4 days.*
- 2. The virus then blends into a nasal fluid that enters the trachea and then the lungs, causing pneumonia. This takes about 5/6 days further.*
- 3. With the pneumonia comes high fever and difficulty in breathing.*
- 4. The nasal congestion is not like the normal kind. You feel like you're drowning. It's imperative you then seek immediate attention.*

CONVENTION NEWS



It is just two short months until the annual convention in Denver on May 14-17. Those who plan on attending should make their reservations for the banquet and the hotel prior to the cutoff dates which are as follows:

Hotel Reservations Cutoff Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Banquet Reservations Cutoff Date: Monday, May 11, 2020

Golfers Reservations Cutoff Date: Thursday, May 7, 2020

All the details are contained in the Convention section of the Golden Eagles website, www.thegoldeneagles.org.

MEMBERS WHO HAVE SIGNED UP FOR THE CONVENTION SO FAR:

Tom Doherty 2

Curt Forney 2

Dave Furili 2

Jim Highbanks 2
Blake Lamar 1
Bill Lewis 2
George Lycan 1
Russell McKnire 1
Jim Morehead 1
Larry Neglia 2
Larry Nelson 2
Dave Newell 2
Girard Rivard 2
Mark Sheprow 2
Gary Small 2

There are a number of members who have stated their intention to attend but have not as yet made their reservations. As a rule, most attendees make their reservations nearer the convention date. Their names will be added to this list when their reservations have been made. Wouldn't you like your name in print for all to see? ☐☐

This will likely be the last formal convention for the foreseeable future, so make your reservations today and join your friends for a memorable last hurrah. I know some may be concerned about traveling and attending a group event during this Coronavirus situation, but by all indications it is not as bad as the media makes it to be.☐ Hopefully it will be abating by May, air travel is said to be pretty safe and we promise to discourage hand shaking, kissing and various other forms of "bare skin" ☐ touching at the gathering. Groping, copping a feel, staring, lecherous grins, winking and close dancing will still be tolerated!☐☐

Remember the banquet meal is being partially subsidized by the Golden Eagles treasury to keep the cost of the banquet affordable and the hospitality suite drinks and food are free. Traditionally wherever there are free drinks pilots will show up, so we should have a good turnout at the hospitality suite!☐☐

PASS TRAVEL NEWS

Q & A

Q. Can I buy a discounted guarantee seat AND at the same time list myself stand by?

A. NO!

Q. I just bought 20% tickets for the first time ever. First, how do they know you are a retiree and get to check free bags. Three people and six bags is what I will have. Also, can I check in 24 hours ahead on my home computer for seats? Will they let me change them when I get to the airport if the seats are not together and there are seats open. I have three kids, 9, 11 and 13. I have 2 more traveling with me on basic economy tickets as well.

A.

1. When you book ua20discount, go to [United.com](https://www.united.com) and put your reservations in, it should show 2 bags free up to 70 lbs.

2. Regular ticket follow regular pax rules even they travel with you.

3. As far as seating, for BasicEconomy ticket, you can go online pay " pre select seat " or even buy out BE ticket.

4. You still need to follow the BE restrictions unless you pay with united chase card.

•

I would not buy basic economy if you want to sit together. Since you just bought it, change to regular economy if you want to sit with kids. They are old enough, though, to be separated- then keep the basic if you want. Baggage is at bottom of reservation

Q. I am trying to book travel on my Ual app with leisure travel and it will not show me " more flights" after 11:30am. I want a 12:30 flt through Den and it shows on my Ual discount but not on Standby travel. Plz help thanks.

A. This is a limitation of the mobile app. I would suggest instead using eres.ual.com, which is now optimized for use on a mobile device. This will allow you to specify the times you'd like to depart, and often has many more flight options displayed.

Q. Why is it that when I go to MyUA Discount to get the 20% discount, the fare I'm given is the same as I'm quoted on Travelocity or other travel sites. Where's the discount?

A. Occasionally the discount travel site fare shows up when requesting the MyUA20% discounted fare.....be sure you are on the MyUA discount page when you get the fare. The other day it kept bringing me to the UA page instead of the discount page even though I kept clicking the discount page.

Doug Edmunds to UNITED New Pass Travel Policies, Retirees and Actives

Some exciting, and much-requested updates were just rolled out on employeeRES:

- Toggle button to swap cities in the “To” and “From” fields
- Email address is now optional on all bookings, EXCEPT when pre-paying for travel, as the payment system requires an email address to process the payment
- We’ve added the aircraft type to all flights on the flight search results pages
- When booking using a mobile device browser (not the United app), we now show the flight number and flight duration for all flights shown on the flight search results pages
- We’ve fixed the error that was causing an incorrect boarding date to be used when booking travel that includes a lap child
- We’ve fixed the issue where the wrong boarding priority was being used when working crew have family and buddies traveling with them during specific holidays

We continue to listen to everyone’s feedback. While we cannot implement every suggestion, we do have more exciting updates, many suggest by you, the users, to come in the next few months. Stay tuned

Q. If I buy a UA 20% discount and the only fare left is basic economy, can I check a bag without the fee?

A. yes

Q. I purchased a UA 20% Discount on a Basic Economy ticket for travel next week. The event I was attending has been cancelled due to COVID-19. Do I have options to recover any of the money?

A.



- If it was purchased prior to 3/2/2020 you can waive the change fee and book for any other trip. If the new fare is lower you would be issued a travel voucher for the difference. If the fare is higher you pay the difference. Must be re-booked by 12/31/2020 or one year from original ticket issue.

Q. I have a question. If an active employee or a retiree dies does the spouse retain

flight benefits?

A. [Anita Ware](#): There is a chart located on Flying Together- Travel- Survivor Benefits, that details who gets what. Anyone who is retired, or retired eligible, gets lifetime passes at SA2R for spouse or domestic partner(unless they remarry or enter a domestic partnership, in which case passes end). In addition children keep their passes until age 26 (or any age if disabled prior to 26). Parents keep passes for a limited time and Enrolled Friends may continue to travel for 90 days from death of sponsor.

Q. Can an enrolled friend travel in first class internationally alone without the employee?

A. Yes

Q. Who can we contact about our imputed income ? I think mine is incorrect .. do I call the travel center ?

A. If you have not done so already, go to your Travel Report on EmployeeRes quick links, and look at the breakdown of charges.

Q. Does someone have the phone number to call for account locked on Flying Together?

A. UAL Help Desk for IT issues 847-700-5800, General help 800-255-5801 with log in and password issues, Employee Travel Center (ETC), ETC@united.com or 877-825-3729 for most pass related issues.

Q. I need to know where to go to find out my travels done the last year

A. You can get to it by logging into ft.ual.com and click on the "travel" link at the top. Then click on "pass travel report" under the travel heading. That should get you what you need. There may be an easier way, but this works for me.
Once on the Travel Report, you are able to change the start and end dates (including the year). Once you input the date frame you are requesting, you then need to click where it says "run report".

Q. Does anyone have any idea how we can get an enrolled friend on to employee res so they can list themselves? I've set them up from my end with access in my profile. I just don't know where to go from here! Any help greatly appreciated!

A. The web address they will use is: <https://erespassrider.united.com>. Have them use this

web address to enter the listing site. They will use the username and password you set up to go through the listing process.

Q. REPORTING BACK on traveling with pet on myUADiscount.

A. Just spoke with reservations. If you are traveling with a pet on the myUA discount you MUST call reservations and have them listed!! They will then give you a confirmation number. On day of travel, go to the ticket counter to receive a “pet tag” for your dog’s carrier. There is NO charge for this. If you are traveling with a pet on NRSA travel, there is NO need to call reservations. Just proceed to the ticket counter to receive a “pet tag”.

What is United`s policy on Coronavirus caused changes to ticket policies:

United Airlines referred us to their [COVID-19 \(click on this link for access to website\) website](#) with cleaning information and flyer resources. According to that page, their cancellation policy is as follows:

- Flights booked between Mar. 3 and 31, 2020, can be changed for free over the next 12 months.
- Flyers booked to travel between Mar. 10 and Apr. 30, 2020 can change their plans without paying a change fee, regardless of when tickets were purchased or destination.

These temporary changes are despite the airline’s [new policy over refunds for changed flights](#).

LAC NEWS

The Hill Country (San Antonio/Austin area) LAC will be having their quarterly luncheon at the Pecan Street Brewery in Johnson City, TX at 1130 am on Wednesday, April 15. If you are in the area please feel free to join us for some good food, drink and camaraderie.

Hazmat suits will be provided free of charge at the front door! ☐☐☐

AIRLINE NEWS

Boeing finds debris in wing fuel tanks of undelivered 737 MAXs, orders inspections

Feb. 18, 2020 at 3:21 pm Updated Feb. 18, 2020 at 6:18 pm



A Boeing 737 MAX, one of 192 stored in November at Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake.
(Mike Siegel / The Seattle Times)



By

[Dominic Gates](#)

Seattle Times aerospace reporter

In the latest of a string of quality control issues, Boeing discovered debris that mechanics left inside the wing fuel tanks of several undelivered 737 MAXs during the aircraft assembly process.

Boeing has ordered inspections of all the undelivered MAXs, about 400 of which are stored at various locations.

Regarding the additional 385 MAXs that were delivered to customers but have been grounded for almost a year and are parked at airfields around the world, company spokesman Bernard Choi said Boeing is recommending inspections for those airplanes that have been in storage for more than a year. "It's still undecided if we will inspect the rest" of

the delivered MAX fleet, he added. “Obviously, we’ll do what’s right for safety.”

Mark Jenks, vice president and general manager of the 737 program and its Renton assembly site, sent all 737 employees a message Tuesday outlining a series of actions to deal with the problem of what’s referred to in the aviation industry as “Foreign Object Debris,” or FOD.

“FOD is absolutely unacceptable,” his message said. “We need our entire team to make this a priority.”

Boeing spokesman Chaz Bickers said that although Boeing must now inspect all the stored MAXs for similar debris, “we don’t think this changes our timeline for the MAX return to service” by mid-summer.

FAA orders inspections of all Boeing 737 MAXs to fix defect



Feb. 25, 2020

Nearly 200 completed Boeing 737 MAX airplanes built for airlines worldwide, have... (Mike Siegel / The Seattle Times) More



By

[Dominic Gates](#)

Seattle Times aerospace reporter

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has prepared an airworthiness directive requiring all Boeing 737 MAXs to be inspected for a manufacturing defect the jet maker discovered in December. All MAXs found to have the defect will have to be fixed before they can fly again, although Boeing doesn’t expect

this requirement to add further delay to the aircraft's return to service. The FAA directive was posted to the Federal [Register](#) on Tuesday, a day ahead of formal publication.

The manufacturing defect, which was [reported by The Seattle Times and others in January](#), arose when mechanics working on the final finish of the airplanes, polishing the carbon composite engine pods at the end of the production [process](#), ground away some underlying layers of metal foil in the upper part of the pod that are necessary for lightning protection.

The error leaves the engine pods, called nacelles, vulnerable to a lightning strike, "which could potentially lead to a dual engine power loss event," the FAA directive states. If not addressed, the condition could result in a forced landing away from an airport "due to loss of thrust control on both engines," the FAA added.

The work required to [fix](#) the issue is just 12 hours per airplane — five hours to do the inspection and a further seven hours if a fix is required, the FAA estimated. Boeing spokesman Bernard Choi said Tuesday that the company is "coordinating with our customers to complete the work prior to safe return to service." He added that Boeing's projection that the MAX should be cleared to fly by midsummer is not affected by this additional work, which can be done while the planes are on the ground awaiting approval of the design updates. "We've not changed our estimate for return to service," Choi said.

The fix for the defect requires replacement of two carbon composite fairing panels that cover the area where the [engine](#) pod hangs from the strut that connects it to the wing. Operators will also have to apply a sealant to establish a required electrical bond path to safely disperse any lightning strike.

The FAA describes the defect as arising out of "excessive rework of the surface of the metallic (aluminum foil) inner layer of those panels (that) can result in cuts to that layer." The metal foil serves as a shield against a surge of electrical current. Without it, the FAA's directive states, lightning could "induce spurious signals onto the underlying airplane wiring, including wiring associated with the engine control systems," which could cause a loss of thrust control to one or both engines.

When Boeing discovered the manufacturing problem, it alerted airline operators in December that inspections of certain MAXs built in the past year should be completed within six months, and fixes made as required. The FAA, however, is insisting that all of the roughly 800 MAXs built so far be inspected, and where necessary fixed "before further flight." Boeing will have to cover all the costs under warranty.

Boeing suspends 737 MAX chief pilot and his co-workers

Seattle, Washington - Boeing put three employees on administrative leave who worked with the former chief technical pilot of the 737 MAX program.

Federal grand jury investigates whether the chief technical pilot of Boeing's 737 MAX program intentionally misled the Federal Aviation Administration about the aircraft's stall-prevention [software](#) which caused two fatal crashes.

The employees were notified of the action this week, according to the people, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive personnel matters.

Meanwhile, as part of a U.S. criminal investigation, the grand jury has been examining statements made to the FAA by the former chief technical pilot, Mark Forkner, one person said. Forkner has been at the center of the Max controversy since October when Boeing released internal messages in which he expressed worry over misleading the agency about the new software. He also discussed “Jedi mind tricking” regulators outside the U.S. into accepting the training requirements for the new plane.

Clowns and Monkeys

Boeing released more internal messages in January, provoking an outcry from Congressional investigators and victims’ families over comments in which employees mocked regulators and seemed to suggest a cavalier attitude toward safety. The names of the employees were redacted. “This airplane is designed by clowns, who in turn are supervised by monkeys,” one employee wrote. “Would you put your family on a Max simulator trained aircraft? I wouldn’t,” an employee said in another message.

Under Chief Executive Officer Dave Calhoun, who took over for the ousted Dennis Muilenburg last month, the planemaker has pledged to restore public trust. The personnel moves come after Calhoun vowed to stamp out the disturbing behavior revealed in the messages. In a call with reporters Jan. 22, he called them “totally appalling” and said they were part of a “micro-culture” that doesn’t reflect the company’s values. A statement at the time the messages were released said Boeing would take “appropriate action” ultimately including disciplinary moves.

A Boeing spokesman declined to comment on the personnel moves.

The New York Times earlier reported that prosecutors have questioned several Boeing employees in front of the grand jury in recent months about whether Forkner deliberately misled FAA officials. “Boeing is cooperating with the Justice Department investigation,” said Gordon Johndroe, a Boeing spokesman. The Justice Department declined to comment.

The Max, Boeing’s top-selling plane, has been grounded worldwide for almost a year, costing one of the largest U.S. exporters nearly \$19 billion and disrupting the global aviation industry. A criminal investigation began weeks after the October 2018 crash of a Max operated by Lion Air and became public after another Max flown by Ethiopian Airlines crashed in March near Addis Ababa.

Unprecedented Scrutiny

The accidents killed a total of 346 people and led to unprecedented scrutiny of a century-old company whose name is nearly synonymous with the flight. The investigation is being conducted in part by the Transportation Department’s Inspector General’s office, and the Justice Department’s Criminal Division in Washington is using a grand jury to help gather information, Bloomberg has reported.

In messages to a colleague in November 2016, Forkner expressed worry that he had misled the FAA on how the system implicated in both crashes, known as the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System, worked. “So I basically lied to the regulators (unknowingly),” he wrote. “It wasn’t a lie, no one told us this was the case,” a colleague replied.

Initially, Boeing engineers designed MCAS to [activate](#) only at high speeds. But the company concluded later in the plane’s development that it needed to operate during all speed ranges. “Oh shocker alert! MCAS is now active down to M .2,” Forkner wrote to his colleague, an apparent reference to 0.2 times the speed of sound, a relatively slow speed for a jet. He continued by saying that MCAS -- which automatically

pushes down the nose of the jet -- had been “running rampant” in a simulator and called it “egregious.” The changes in MCAS have been a central part of the accident investigations; the increase in the system’s power made it harder for pilots to counteract during a malfunction.

Forkner’s lawyer, David Gerger, has said the full context of the chat shows that there was no attempt to lie to the FAA. Forkner’s concerns were with how a simulator being developed for the Max was performing, Gerger said last year. “Mark’s [career](#) - at Air Force, at FAA, and at Boeing - was about safety. And based on everything he knew, he absolutely thought this plane was safe,” Gerger said. He didn’t reply Friday to an [email](#) seeking comment.

The messages released by Boeing in January included others suggesting employees were concerned they had misled people. “This isn’t a true [statement](#),” said one unidentified person in a May 15, 2018, series of messages. “Yes, I still haven’t been forgiven by God for the covering up I did last year,” another person replied.

The subject about which they are writing isn’t clear from the messages, and later in the conversation, one of the people added: “Ok then. We are good. No problem then.”

Via Bloomberg

Boeing’s First 737 MAX 10 Completes Its First Taxi Test

- by [Andrew Curran](#)
- March 3, 2020

Boeing has just conducted the first taxi test of its Boeing 737 MAX 10. The test was run earlier today in Renton, WA.



Boeing completed the first taxi test for its first MAX 10 today. Photo: Boeing.

Taxi tests are a routine part of an aircraft’s design and certification process. It involves a series of taxi and runway manoeuvres, including accelerating down the runway. Taxi tests do not involve becoming

airborne.

The MAX 10 is yet to undertake its first test flight. Boeing told Simple Flying they are on track to do so later in 2020.

Deliveries were expected to commence later this year but are now expected to begin in 202

That, of course, is subject to the worldwide grounding of 737 MAX aircraft being lifted.

Progress continues on the MAX 10

The [first 737 MAX 10 was only unveiled three months ago](#). The MAX 10 is 64" longer than the MAX 9 and has a [new main landing gear design](#).

Boeing says it has firm commitments for 550 MAX 10s from over 20 customers.

The 737 MAX 10 is the biggest aircraft in the MAX family. It will be powered by the latest technology CFM International LEAP-1B engines and feature advanced technology winglets, Boeing Sky Interior, large flight deck displays, and other features designed to deliver the best possible flight experience.

At 43.8 meters in length, the MAX 10 just pips the length of the MAX 9. In comparison, the MAX 8 is 39.52 meters in length and the MAX 7 is 35.56 meters in length.

All four aircraft in the MAX family have the same wingspan – 35.56 meters.

And while the MX 10 can carry the most passengers (up to 230 depending on cabin configuration), it has the shortest range of the four aircraft. The MAX 10 can fly up to 6,110 kilometers. That's pretty good for a narrowbody jet. But the smaller aircraft in the MAX family can go further. The best performer is the MAX 7. That can fly up to 7,130 kilometers.

Over 550 MAX 10s sold

Boeing has sold over 3,200 MAX 8 aircraft. The MAX 10 is the second most popular variant in the MAX family, having sold 550 of the aircraft. All are yet to be delivered.

Customers include AerCap, multiple aircraft leasing companies, Copa Airlines, flydubai, GOL, Lion Air, Malaysia Airlines, TUI and SkyUp Airlines. The biggest customer is [United Airlines](#). United has put up their hand for 100 MAX 10s.

The United order dates back to June 2017. That must seem like a lifetime ago for Boeing. At the time, Andrew Levy, United Airlines executive vice president and chief financial officer said;

"The 737 MAX 10 will enable us to continue using larger and more efficient aircraft within our domestic network and better meet the needs of our customers today and into the future."



United Airlines already has MAXs

in its fleet and has 100 MAX 10s on order. Photo: United Airlines.

United expected to take delivery of its first MAX 10s later in 2020.

Of course, with the [MAX aircraft grounded](#) and production suspended, the original timelines won't stick. United Airlines was flying 14 MAX 9s prior to the grounding twelve months ago. It had planned to be operating 30 MAXs by now.

But the MAX 10 taxi test today represents a bright spot for both Boeing and the customers, like [United Airlines](#), who have ordered the aircraft. Despite all the problems at Boeing, things are still [moving](#) forward.

United Airlines raising checked-bag fees, joining JetBlue

United Airlines on Friday increased its checked-baggage fees by \$5, following a [similar move](#) in January by JetBlue Airways.

The first checked bag is now \$35 each way, the second, \$45. Travelers can avoid the increase by prepaying for bags in advance. The checked-bag prices remain \$30 and \$40 if the fee is paid at any time before [online](#) check-in.

The increase takes effect for travel beginning March 6. Travelers who bought their tickets before Friday, Feb. 21 will be exempt and continue to pay \$30 and \$40.

United spokeswoman Maddie King said the increase covers flight in the United States and on short-haul flights to the Caribbean and Latin America.

Other major airlines are likely to follow suit. [United, Delta and American](#) all matched JetBlue's previous bag fee increase, in 2018.

No-frills airlines including [Spirit, Frontier and Allegiant](#) already charge varying prices for checked (and carry-on) bags depending when you purchase them and, in many cases, where and when you are flying.



'Lack of understanding of how unsafe he was': A pilot in Amazon Air's crashed cargo plane raised safety concerns at previous employers and repeatedly failed key exams

[Rachel Premack](#)



Dec 21, 2019, 10:22 AM

The National

Transportation Safety Board just made public more than 3,000 pages of its investigation into Atlas Air Flight 3591, which was a flight contracted by Amazon. REUTERS/Mark Makela

- The National Transportation Safety Board made public more than 3,000 pages of its investigation into Atlas Air Flight 3591 on December 19.
- That flight was carrying Amazon and US Postal Service cargo, and was contracted by Amazon.
- The NTSB made no final report from the documents, but interviews point to oversights in training and hiring at Atlas.
- The National Transportation Safety Board made public more than 3,000 pages of its investigation into Atlas Air Flight 3591 on Dec 19
- Three people, including two Atlas Air employees and one Mesa Airlines employee riding in the plane's jump seat, died in the February 23 crash. Called CustomAir Obsession, the plane was contracted to Atlas Air by Amazon, and was carrying Amazon and US Postal Service cargo.

The NTSB did not release a final report or conclusion with its opening of the public docket. But, interviews with myriad executives, pilots, and training officials reveal a disturbing truth about safety standards at Atlas Air, which contracted 20 of its 112 planes to Amazon [as of February](#). Amazon also owns 20% of Atlas' stock warrants.

Two pilots were at the helm of Atlas Air Flight 3591, which it crashed on February 23 in Houston, Texas. The captain was Ricky Blakely, who had worked for Atlas Air since September 2015. He had 11,000 hours of flight experience and 1,250 hours of experience with the Boeing 767.

Read more: [An Amazon Air plane crashed in February, killing all 3 people on board. Weeks earlier, several pilots said they thought an accident was inevitable.](#)

Conrad Jules Aska, the first officer, or copilot, had 5,000 hours total flight experience and about 520 hours of experience with the Boeing 767. Mesa Airlines Capt. Sean Archuleta, who was riding in the jump [seat](#), also died in the crash.

What the NTSB documents showed

The NTSB investigators found numerous problems relating to Atlas' pilot hiring practices — specifically around Aska. The first officer previously worked at Mesa Airlines, Air Wisconsin, and CommutAir. At the latter two airlines, the NTSB found that he failed to [finish](#) training and was promptly flushed out of those carriers. He spent just a month at CommutAir.

Before working at Atlas, Aska was a first officer at Mesa. He tried but could not upgrade from FO to captain on the Embraer 175 regional jet at the Phoenix-based regional carrier. Check airmen, or pilot trainers, at Mesa raised several concerning flags to NTSB investigators.

Captain Paul Allred, Mesa Air check airman, told the NTSB that Aska was "one of the worst he'd ever seen, probably a 2" out of 10 in terms of piloting skills.

Meanwhile, Captain Leigh Lawless, another Mesa Air check airman, said Aska had a "lack of understanding of how unsafe he was."



Aerial view of the debris following Atlas Air 3591's crash into Trinity Bay, near Houston, Texas. [National Transportation Safety Board](#)

NTSB investigators wrote, from talking with Lawless, that Aska "was making very frantic mistakes, lots and lots of mistakes, and did a lot of things wrong but did not recognize this was a problem. He thought he was a good pilot never had any problems and thought that he should be a captain. He could not evaluate himself and see that he did not have the right stuff."

Aska later applied to Atlas Air. He did not disclose his short stretches at Air Wisconsin or CommutAir while [applying](#).

An Atlas spokesperson told Business Insider that the company's employees "meet or exceed all government safety standards. Atlas pilot training includes multiple reviews, evaluations and proficiency checks to comply with FAA regulations."

The spokesperson, who said Atlas is cooperating with the NTSB investigation, added that Atlas has enhanced employee training and candidate background checks since the crash.

Quick scaling

Scott Anderson, senior director of flight procedures, training, and standards at Atlas, told NTSB investigators that the airline would not have hired Aska had they known about his failures to pass trainings at those two airlines.

The pilot told Atlas during the hiring process that he was involved in real estate and freelance work during the two-year gap of his [resume](#), which Atlas Air believed at the time.

"Any idea why Atlas didn't know about that -- those training difficulties?" the NTSB investigator asked.

"I don't know," Anderson responded. "I don't know."

Meanwhile, [aviation attorney Steven Marks](#) — who is representing Aska [in a federal lawsuit against Amazon, Atlas, and other parties](#) — said every proficiency check and airline an applicant works for is disclosed by the Federal Aviation Agency when they apply to a new airline. "It is a wakeup call to start paying attention more to the operations and not compromise safety at the expense of growth," Marks told Business Insider.

Additionally, Anderson said Aska had several remedial trainings while at Atlas. Asked why he did not receive additional remedial training or retribution, Anderson referred to "mitigating circumstances" —

including the presence of FAA officials observing his type rating, which could have made him more nervous and his performance worse, as well as damage to his home during Hurricane Irma.



The pilots who move your Amazon Air packages for contractors like Atlas Air have raised issue with their employers. Ted S. Warren / AP Images

Anderson alluded in his interview to the quick scaling of Atlas Air in recent years. That growth is largely due to its partnership with Amazon, which it began working with in 2016.

[Business Insider spoke with 13 pilots who work at Atlas Air and ATSG, Amazon's other air cargo partner, earlier this year.](#) Those pilots described how a culture of quick growth at Atlas, due to the Amazon contract, which contributed to a decline in safety and hiring standards.

"I am concerned anytime that new entrants into aviation particularly carrying packages or goods enter a market where their background has been essentially trying to cut [costs](#) to make money," [Jim Hall](#), who led the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) from 1994 to 2001, previously told Business Insider, referring specifically to Amazon.

"Cutting costs in aviation causes deaths and accidents."

Impact of coronavirus on airline industry to be worse than 9/11

The impact of the coronavirus on air travel is expected to be greater than the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 or the 2003 SARS epidemic, as more airlines slash flights in response to shrinking demand.

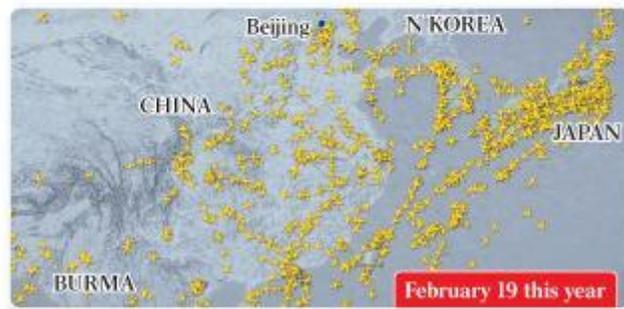
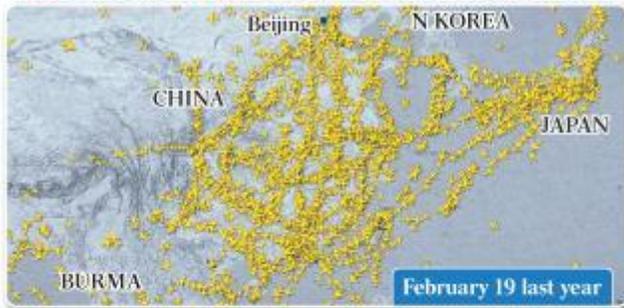
Since the China government banned outbound group travel on January 24, more than 200,000 flights have been cancelled or removed from schedules to, from and within the country.

As demonstrated in recent announcements by Singapore Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Qantas and Virgin Australia, the flight cancellations have spread to much of Asia, New Zealand and [parts](#) of Europe and also

hit domestic networks. Services to Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia have been reduced, with further cuts expected as a result of fresh outbreaks to Italy and Iran.

At Cathay Pacific alone, 25,000 employees have agreed to take unplanned leave as the airline grapples with the fallout from Covid-19. Qantas has revealed the impact of capacity cuts is equivalent to 18 aircraft being grounded, and 700 full-time roles are currently considered “surplus” to needs and managed through paid leave.

ASIAN AIR TRAFFIC ... THEN AND NOW



Source: WSJ



Although government-issued travel restrictions designed to help contain the deadly virus have played a major role in the flight cancellations, [anxiety](#) about air travel and the sudden cessation of the Chinese visitor boom are adding to the woes facing airlines.

China tourism consultant Andy Jiang, a former Tourism Australia destination manager, said it was unlikely at this point that easing travel bans would make much difference.

“I think with coronavirus being somewhat contained within mainland China and accelerated outbreaks outside of China, there will be a sentiment shift among Chinese that it might be safer to stay in China than to travel elsewhere,” Mr Jiang said. “By then, removing the travel ban probably would provide a smaller recovery than what we would initially expect.” Mr Jiang released analysis predicting dwindling numbers of Chinese visitors to Australia through to June. The data showed just over 12,000 arrivals from China in February, compared with 144,228 in the same month last year, in a total cost to the [national](#) visitor economy of \$838m.

In March, 10,459 Chinese visitors are expected, down from 125,644 last year, and by June Mr Jiang expected that figure to shrink to 6785. Mr Jiang said his assessment did not include the considerable impact on the international education sector.

Since January 24, Qantas shares have nosedived 15 per cent from \$6.71 to Wednesday's close of \$5.72.

Virgin Australia shares have also been stung, slipping to a record low of 12c, from 14.5c.

Travel company Webjet fared even worse with shares sinking 22 per cent in just over a month, from \$14.30 on January 24, to \$11.06 on Wednesday. In Europe, EasyJet shares suffered their biggest drop since Britain voted to leave the EU in June 2016, plummeting 16.9 per cent. Shares in Ryanair slid 13.5 per cent and Air France and Deutsche Lufthansa both saw shares [lose](#) more than 8 per cent of their value.

“The coronavirus numbers increasing so much in Italy and in the Middle East has given concerns that maybe this will take much more time to contain than first expected,” said Henrik Drusebjerg, chief strategist at Danske Bank Wealth Management. “Investors now fear that this is not just a first-quarter thing ... and the overall growth impact will be much more severe than first thought.”

With Wall Street Journal

A few months ago we posted a link to a video about Continental Airlines history called "The Airline Pride Built". It is a well done historical review of Continental and its` people. The link to the video is posted here again for those who may not have seen it. Enjoy, and thanks to Golden Eagles member Mike Lichtenfeld for sharing the video with us.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STrRZL1m27o&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0s2QepdGK2dS87pAA T2nTC9QEsZDG0ml1EWws6i63CeUPsHrYKaXA2QCE>

More training.....

FAA Boosts Training for Airline Pilots

BY ANDY PASZTOR

U.S. aviation regulators are mandating enhanced training for airline pilots, from newly hired first officers to veteran captains, culminating years of debate over how to improve cockpit decision making and leadership skills.

The final rule, which is slated to become effective by April 2023, calls for recurrent command and mentoring training for captains. The Federal Aviation Administration also ordered new co-pilots to sit as observers on at least two flights carrying ticketed customers before being allowed to fly passengers themselves.

Some airlines already voluntarily incorporate some of those principles in training programs, but the FAA is moving to standardize such requirements across the industry to comply with congressional language and recommendations by accident investigators stretching back nearly a decade.

The document, posted on the Federal Register website, indicates the goal is to “mitigate incidents of unprofessional pilot behavior and reduce pilot

NEW MEMBERS

Fred Gott	Jan
Albigence Waldo	Jan
James Barrow	Mar
Craig McDonald	Mar

Welcome aboard gents. ☐

AND.....THE LIGHTER SIDE.....



A little old lady was walking down the street dragging two large plastic garbage bags behind her. One of the bags was ripped and every once in awhile a \$20 bill fell out onto the sidewalk.

Noticing this, a policeman stopped her, and said, "Ma'am, there are \$20 bills falling out of that bag."

"Oh, really? Darn it!" said the little old lady. "I'd better go back and see if I can find them. Thanks for telling me, Officer."

"Well, now, not so fast," said the cop. "Where did you get all that money? You didn't steal it, did you?"

"Oh, no, no", said the old lady. "You see, my back yard is right next to a Golf course. A lot of Golfers come and pee through a knot hole in my fence, right into my flower garden. It used to really tick me off. Kills the flowers, you know. Then I thought, 'why not make the best of it?' So, now, I stand behind the fence by the knot hole, real quiet, with my hedge clippers. Every time some guy sticks his thing through my fence, I surprise him, grab hold of it and say, 'O.K., buddy! Give me \$20 or off it comes!'

"Well, that seems only fair," said the cop, laughing. "OK. Good luck! Oh, by the way, what's in the other bag?"



"Not everybody pays." ☐

Historic Days in British Military History: The Royal Air Force is formed 1st April 1918

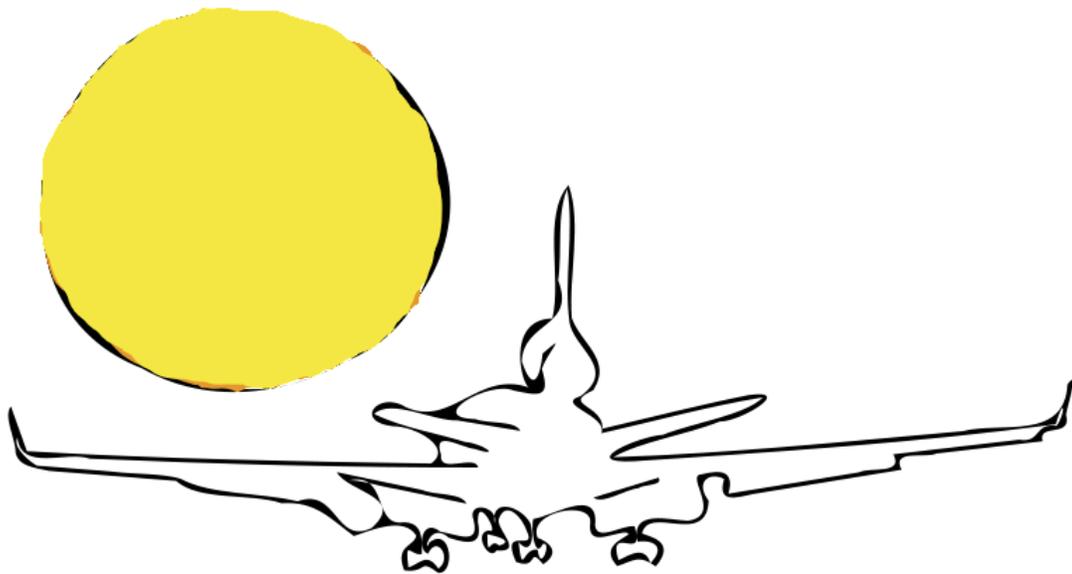
WHO ARE WE
GOING TO GET
TO FLY THESE
THINGS?

GOD KNOWS.. THEY'RE
BLOODY DANGEROUS, YOU'D
HAVE TO BE AN IDIOT..



LET'S GET ARROGANT, SELF OBSESSED,
OVER CONFIDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL TYPES.
IDIOTS THAT THINK THEY'RE INVINCIBLE.
SMART UNIFORMS, A LITTLE EXTRA PAY,
TELL THEM THE GIRLS FIND THEM
IRRESISTIBLE AND HOPE THEY NEVER
REALISE THEIR LIFE EXPECTANCY IS 23.

I read that, by law, you have to turn on your headlights when it's raining in Sweden. How the hell am I supposed to know if it's raining in Sweden?



GONE WEST

Pleased to report there have been no Gone West flights in February or so far in March ☐



GONE WEST - 2019-2020

* Denotes Golden Eagles member

Names in red denote gone west since last update

Bob Pigors	Jan 3, 2019
Harry Watson *	Jan 10, 2019
Almond Carroll	Jan 22, 2019
Thomas Steele	Jan 27, 2019
John Huber	Feb 27, 2019
Robert DeGrishe	Mar 5, 2019
Robert Hutten	April 6, 2019
Carl McGee	April 8, 2019
Charlie Walker*	April 14, 2019
Joe Portlock	May 1, 2019
Dan Brady	May 9, 2019
Warren Beckman	June 29, 2019
Ray Bukovsky	June, 2019
Joseph Mesimer	June 3, 2019
Hal Sheads*	June 3, 2019
Ralph Bellerue *	June 12, 2019
Bob Pries	July 11, 2019
Glenn "Spike" Squires	July 13, 2019
G. M. "Casey" Cameron *	July 18, 2019
Larry Mechem *	July 26, 2019
Robert Foley	July 29, 2019
Richard Bombard	July 31, 2019
Roy Snead	Aug 15, 2019
Tony Eggers	Aug 21, 2019
Phillip Kemp	Aug 22, 2019
Gus Wenzel	Aug 24, 2019
Don Griffin *	Aug 24, 2019
Ray Brendle*	Nov 17, 2019
Gene Chancy	Nov 14, 2019
Randy Rawls *	Dec 5, 2019
Chester James*	Dec 6, 2019
Jeff Burke*	Dec 7, 2019
Jim McBride	Jan, 2020



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

Dave Newell
EVP/Golden Eagles Email Liaison
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