

Canada's WestJet planning to return 737 MAX to service in January

January 6 2021



Canadian regulators must still reopen the country's airspace to the 737 MAX following its worldwide grounding in 2019

Canadian airline WestJet said Wednesday it plans to return its passenger fleet of Boeing 737 MAX aircraft to the skies this month, nearly two

years ago after their worldwide grounding following two crashes that killed 346 people.

"Our first MAX will be ready to return safely to service as of January 21," company president Ed Sims said in a statement.

The return to service, however, is conditional on regulators reopening Canadian airspace to the jetliner, a decision expected this month after Boeing addressed [technical issues](#) and improved [pilot training](#) on the MAX.

In December, the Canadian government announced that it had validated changes made to the design of the aircraft used by domestic carriers Air Canada, WestJet and Sunwing.

"While we don't have final confirmation on when (Transport Canada) will open Canadian airspace to the 737 MAX aircraft, in the interest of transparency we are sharing our intent to fly once this confirmation is received," Sims said.

The first Westjet MAX flights—to be operated three times per week between Calgary and Toronto—are scheduled to take off on January 21.

The MAX crisis began with a 2018 crash of the jet in Indonesia, followed by another in March 2019 in Ethiopia, which killed a total of 346 people and saw the [aircraft](#) taken out of service across the globe.

Brazil was the first country to allow it to return to service, starting with a domestic flight in December by Brazilian budget carrier Gol, followed by American Airlines in the United States.

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