

Boeing says employees must take 'immediate' action on safety measures

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US aeronautics giant Boeing has faced scrutiny from regulators following a series of close calls in recent weeks.

US aeronautics giant Boeing, facing increased scrutiny after a series of safety incidents and manufacturing issues, is directing employees to take "immediate actions" to improve operations, according to a message the company sent to its workforce Tuesday.

The guidance, from Boeing's head of commercial aviation Stan Deal, comes after an audit by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)—undertaken after a close call on an Alaska Airlines flight in January—found instances of non-compliance at the manufacturer.

"We have used your feedback, and those from our regulator and customers, to take immediate actions to strengthen our safety and quality," Deal said.

"These actions are central to a comprehensive plan we will soon deliver to the FAA," he added, referring to the US regulator's order earlier this month that Boeing come up with a framework to address quality control within 90 days.

According to Deal, "the vast majority of our audit non-compliances involved not following our approved processes and procedures."

To address the issues, management will set up additional training for relevant employees, establish weekly compliance checks and dedicate a portion of each shift to review procedures and check tools.

These new measures are in addition to the others put in place in recent weeks, including additional inspections.

The FAA audit came in response to a near-catastrophic incident in January, when a fuselage panel on a Boeing 737 MAX 9 Alaska Airlines jet blew off mid-flight.

No one was seriously injured, but the plane was forced to make an [emergency landing](#) with a gaping hole in the cabin.

Of the 89 production process audits conducted by the FAA, Boeing failed 33 of them, the New York Times reported Tuesday, with 97

instances of non-compliance identified.

The concerns included one use of a hotel key card to check a door seal and the use of liquid dish soap as a mechanical lubricant, according to the Times.

Series of incidents

Deal's letter also addressed the findings of an independent expert commission appointed by the FAA, which found shortcomings with Boeing's safety standards—notably, that they may be too complex and cause confusion among employees.

"Our teams are working to simplify and streamline our processes and address the panel's recommendations," Deal said, while meanwhile calling on employees to implement certain changes immediately.

"Precisely follow every step of our manufacturing procedures and processes," he urged.

"We can and should update procedures and processes, but until then, we must adhere to the existing ones."

Employees should also "always be on the lookout for a potential safety hazard or quality escape," Deal added, encouraging them to use the company's internal reporting system to flag concerns when necessary.

Boeing is still facing investigations from the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), while US media has reported the Justice Department has opened a criminal investigation.

The company has faced questions following several other potentially dangerous episodes in addition to the Alaska incident, including an

engine fire on a Boeing 747 shortly after takeoff from Florida in January.

Last week, a Boeing 777 jetliner bound for Japan had to make an emergency landing shortly after takeoff from San Francisco when a wheel fell off and plunged into an airport parking lot, damaging several cars.

And New Zealand authorities on Tuesday launched an investigation after a Boeing 787 Dreamliner violently lost altitude mid-flight from Sydney to Auckland, injuring a host of terrified passengers.

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