

# US 737 MAX test flight could be as soon as next week: sources

June 26 2020

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The Boeing 737 MAX has been grounded since March 2019 following two deadly crashes

US regulators are getting close to undertaking a test flight of Boeing's grounded 737 MAX and could schedule the key step for as soon as next

week, two sources said Friday.

The long-delayed [test flight](#) by the Federal Aviation Administration is a critical step in recertifying the plane for service but the exact timing remains fluid, two people familiar with the matter told AFP.

The plane has been grounded globally since March 2019 following two [deadly crashes](#).

Boeing has upgraded software for a flight handling system that was quickly identified as a major factor in crashes of Lion Air and Ethiopian Airlines planes that together claimed 346 lives.

But the recertification of the jet has been delayed by subsequent issues identified up by air safety regulators.

"The team is making progress toward FAA certification flights in the near future," an FAA spokesman said Friday.

"The FAA is reviewing Boeing's documentation to determine whether the company has met the criteria to move to the next stage of evaluation. We will conduct the certification flights only after we are satisfied with that data."

Demand for the plane has plummeted as [global air travel](#) collapsed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Boeing has said it expects certification in time to resume deliveries of the MAX some time during the third quarter, while adding that the timing will be set by the FAA.

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Citation: US 737 MAX test flight could be as soon as next week: sources (2020, June 26)  
retrieved 18 April 2024 from  
<https://techxplore.com/news/2020-06-max-flight-week-sources.html>

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