

Boeing 737 MAX inches towards flying again

21 July 2020



The US Federal Aviation Administration completed test flights of the Boeing 737 MAX, which was grounded after two deadly crashes

The grounded Boeing 737 MAX moved another step closer towards flying again Tuesday as US regulators said they would soon accept public comments on a roadmap to recertify the jet.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said it would issue a proposed airworthiness directive for the MAX, which has been grounded since March 2019 following two [deadly crashes](#).

The listing published in the Federal Register will seek comments on suggested design changes and crew procedures "to mitigate the [safety issues](#) identified during the investigations that followed the Lion Air and Ethiopian Airlines accidents," the FAA said.

The public comment period will be open for 45 days.

The FAA statement moves the MAX a step further on the recertification path after the agency on July 1 completed test flights on the plane.

While the FAA said the announcement is an

"important milestone," the agency emphasized that recertifying the MAX was not a done deal and that there were additional steps even after the public comment period is complete.

These include a final report reviewing and addressing public comments, and a review of Boeing's final design documentation. All MAX aircraft manufactured since the crashes also will need to be personally inspected by FAA staff.

"The FAA will not speculate when the work will be completed. The agency continues to follow a deliberate process and will take the time it needs to thoroughly review Boeing's work," the FAA said.

"We will lift the grounding order only after FAA safety experts are satisfied that the aircraft meets certification standards."

The MAX has been grounded worldwide since March 13, 2019, following an Ethiopian Airlines [crash](#) that killed 157 people. That catastrophe came just a few months after a Lion Air MAX crash that killed 189 people.

The MAX's anti-stall flight system, the MCAS, was partially to blame for both crashes.

But other technical malfunctions, including one involving electrical wiring, were subsequently detected during the aircraft's modification process, slowing down its recertification.

The FAA, like Boeing, is under scrutiny over its role in the development of the MAX, which has been sharply criticized by government auditors and on Capitol Hill.

Representatives Peter DeFazio, an Oregon Democrat who chairs the House Transportation Committee, and Rick Larsen, a Washington state Democrat who chairs the aviation subcommittee, released a letter late Monday asking the agency to provide a recent safety culture survey of employees.

"We believe reviewing the results of this survey will help our Committee properly fulfill our congressional role overseeing the FAA and its efforts to help improve the safety culture at the agency," DeFazio and Larsen said.

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