

The response from the FAA to the safety recommendation of B18616 accident

The Japan Transport Safety Board received the response from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the United States of America to the safety recommendation issued on Aug. 28, 2009 as attached regarding an accident of B18616 (Boeing 737-800) operated by China Airlines at Naha Airport on Aug. 20, 2007.

JTSB safety recommendation to the FAA

The Japan Transport Safety Board recommends the Federal Aviation Administration of the United States of America to supervise the Boeing Company, the manufacturer of the Aircraft, to take the following actions :

When preparing maintenance job instructions for airlines such as Service Letters/Bulletins, the scopes of jobs should be clearly defined and the working conditions and environments including accessibilities to job areas should be appropriately evaluated in order to prevent maintenance errors.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Attachment

OCT 07 2010

Norihiro Goto (Dr.)
Chairman
Japan Transport Safety Board
2-1-2, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 100-8918
Japan

Dear Chairman Goto:

This is in response to the JTSB's safety recommendation to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), concerning "Maintenance Job Instructions" as a result of the JTSB investigation of an accident involving a B-737-800, B18616, on August 20, 2007 at Naha Airport. Your safety recommendation was assigned control number 09.390 and was assigned to our Transport Airplane Directorate for resolution and response.

Accordingly, we have attached a copy of the Directorate's final response to your safety recommendation. We believe the response addresses the JTSB's concerns, and will result in improved service instructions.

We look forward to continued cooperation with the JTSB in promoting aviation safety. If you have any questions, or need additional information regarding this safety recommendation, please contact (Name and Phone Number)

(Original signed)

Tony Fazio
Director, Office of Accident Investigation
and Prevention

Enclosure



Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

Date: August 3, 2010

To: (Name) , Manager, Management Services and Recommendations
Division

Thru: (Name) , Acting Manager, Safety Management Branch

From: (Name) , Acting Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office
(SACO)

Prepared by: (Name) , Program Management Branch

Subject: Final Response to FAA Safety Recommendation 09.390,
"FAA supervision of Boeing Company when preparing maintenance
instructions."

This is the final response to your memorandum of January 4, 2010 regarding FAA Safety Recommendation 09.390 "FAA supervision of Boeing Company when preparing maintenance instructions."

Background:

A safety recommendation was issued to the FAA by the Japan Transport Safety Board (JTSB) as a result of their investigation into the August 20, 2007 accident regarding a China Airlines Boeing 737-800, at Naha Airport, Okinawa. Immediately after the aircraft stopped on the ramp, fuel that was leaking from the fuel tank on the right wing caught fire, engulfing the aircraft in flames. Everyone on board was evacuated from the airplane and there were no reported injuries, however, the aircraft was destroyed.

It was determined that the leak in the fuel tank was caused by a hole punctured in the slat track housing by parts of the slat track downstop mechanism. A washer was missing from the downstop assembly, allowing a bolt to become dislodged and pushed by the slat track, through the slat track housing, which forms part of the fuel tank wall. Prior to the accident, maintenance action had been performed in accordance with a Boeing Service Letter adding locking compound to the nut and bolt of the downstop assembly. Due to accessibility restrictions, this maintenance action was performed without being able to directly view the

downstop mechanism as it was reassembled making it difficult to verify that the washer had been properly reinstalled.

The JTSTB recommends that the FAA supervise The Boeing Company “when preparing maintenance job instructions for airlines such as Service Letters/Bulletins; the scope of jobs should be clearly defined and the working conditions and environment, including accessibilities to job areas should be appropriately evaluated in order to prevent maintenance errors.”

FAA Response:

An FAA Aircraft Certification Office (ACO) reviews and approves all service information prepared by The Boeing Company that is associated with Airworthiness Directives (AD), which are issued by the FAA in response to identified unsafe conditions. The ACO review is performed to ensure that the type design change described in the service information meets the intent of the AD, is clear, and is appropriate to mitigate the unsafe condition. The ACO does not review the adequacy of maintenance instructions. In order to provide a more complete evaluation, the FAA Aircraft Evaluation Group (AEG) is now performing an additional review of AD-related service information to put more focus on the adequacy of the maintenance instructions. Personnel in AEG are trained in aircraft maintenance and have maintenance experience so they are able to evaluate issues concerning working environment and accessibility.

When AD action is not contemplated, the FAA delegates approval of service information to engineering designees at Boeing. However, lessons learned from this accident have made the authors of service information at Boeing more aware of the effect of accessibility on the likelihood of maintenance errors. This awareness should result in improved service instructions.

As a result of the changes mentioned above, we believe that we are currently providing proper oversight of Boeing regarding service information, and we plan no further action.

If you have any questions in reference to this matter, please contact (Name and Phone Number)