

**News**

# US, Canada Ground Boeing 737 Max 8s After Ethiopia Crash

US decision came hours after Canada joined 40 other countries in grounding the planes

By Zeke Miller and Rob Gillies, Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Federal Aviation Administration issued an emergency order Wednesday grounding all Boeing 737 Max aircraft in the wake of a crash of an Ethiopian airliner that killed 157 people, a reversal for the U.S. after federal aviation regulators had maintained it had no data to show the jets are unsafe.

The decision came hours after Canada joined some 40 other countries in barring the Max 8 from its airspace, saying satellite tracking data showed possible but unproven similarities between the Ethiopian Airlines crash and a previous crash involving the

model five months ago. The U.S., one of the last holdouts, also grounded a larger version of the plane, the Max 9.

Daniel Elwell, acting head of the FAA, said enhanced satellite images and new evidence gathered on the ground led his agency to order the jets out of the air.

The data, he said, linked the behavior and flight path of the Ethiopian Airlines Max 8 to data from the crash of a Lion Air jet that plunged into the Java Sea and killed 187 people in October.

“Evidence we found on the ground made it even more likely that the flight path was very close to Lion Air’s,” Elwell told reporters on a conference call Wednesday.

Satellite data right

after the crash wasn’t refined enough to give the FAA what it needed to make the decision to ground planes, Elwell said. But on Wednesday, global air traffic surveillance company Aireon and Boeing were able to enhance the initial data to make it more precise “to create a description of the flight that made it similar enough to Lion Air,” Elwell said.

The Ethiopian plane’s flight data and voice recorders will be sent to France for analysis, Elwell said. Some aviation experts have warned that finding answers in the crash could take months.

Officials at Lion Air in Indonesia have said sensors on their plane produced erroneous in-



Foreign investigators examine wreckage at the scene where the Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 Max 8 crashed shortly after takeoff on Sunday killing all 157 on board, near Bishoftu, or Debre Zeit, south of Addis Ababa, in Ethiopia March 12.

formation on its last four flights, triggering an automatic nose-down command that the pilots were unable to overcome.

President Donald Trump, who announced the grounding, was briefed Wednesday on new developments in the investigation by Elwell and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, and they determined the planes should be grounded, the White House said. Trump spoke afterward with Boeing CEO Dennis Muilenberg and Boeing signed on.

“At the end of the day, it is a decision that has the full support of the secretary, the president and the FAA as an agency,” Elwell said.

Airlines, mainly Southwest, American and United, should be able to swap out planes pretty quickly, and passengers shouldn’t be terribly inconvenienced, said Paul Hudson, president of flyersrights.org, which rep-

resents passengers. The Max, he said, makes up only a small percentage of the U.S. passenger jet fleet, he said.

“I think any disruptions will be very minor,” he said. “The first quarter of the year is the slow quarter, generally for air travel,” adding that the airlines have planes on the ground that aren’t being used on trans-Atlantic flights that could be diverted to domestic routes.

Boeing issued a statement saying it supported the FAA’s decision even though it “continues to have full confidence in the safety of the 737 MAX.” The company also said it had itself recommended the suspension of the Max fleet after consultations with the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board.

“We are supporting this proactive step out of an abundance of caution,” Boeing said.

The groundings will have a far-reaching financial impact on Boeing, at least in the short

term, said John Cox, a veteran pilot and CEO of Safety Operating Systems.

In addition to those that have already been grounded, there are more than 4,600 Boeing 737 Max 8 planes on backlog that are not yet delivered to airlines.

“There are delivery dates that aren’t being met, there’s usage of the aircraft that’s not being met, and all the supply chain things that Boeing so carefully crafted,” Cox said. “If they can’t deliver the airplanes, where do they put the extra engines and the extra fuselage and the extra electrical components?”

Even so, Cox thinks Boeing will recover, because the planes typically fly for 30 to 40 years, and any needed fix will be made quickly, he said.

Boeing’s shares have plummeted almost 11 percent since Sunday’s Ethiopian Airlines crash. On Wednesday, the stock sank to \$363.36 after the FAA announcement but

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**Obituary: Jeanette Spencer**  
October 20, 1942 - January 26, 2019

Jeanette Spencer, Portland writer and photographer, died January 26, 2019 of liver cancer. She was well known in many communities as an artist, poet and playwright. In the 1970s, Jeanette was a founding vendor of Portland Saturday Market, where she sold her Oregon Critters, a rabbit fur covered “pet rock”. At the time of her death she was working on a history book about Saturday Market. Jeanette’s cheerfulness, courage, and irrepress-

ible energy touched many lives. She was a survivor in the truest sense of the word and will remain a beloved icon of our community. A memorial gathering will be held on Sunday, March 17, 2:30-4:30 p.m., Subud Center, 3185 NE Regents Dr, Portland, Ore. Memorial gifts will be dedicated to the completion of her book. More info: kristan.aspen@gmail.com or visit [www.anewtradition.com/obituaries/obituary/16941\\_Jeanette\\_Spencer](http://www.anewtradition.com/obituaries/obituary/16941_Jeanette_Spencer)