

FAA administrators face US lawmakers on Boeing 737 Max Approval

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KEY POINTS

- Federal air safety officials are set to face House lawmakers after two deadly crashes of Boeing 737 Max planes.
- Investigators have pointed to erroneous data from sensors and an automated anti-stall system in the crashes.
- The FAA and Boeing are facing several investigations into how the fast-selling aircraft was certified.

- “Top U.S. air safety officials are facing lawmakers on Wednesday about the [Boeing](#) 737 Max aircraft, the fast-selling plane that was involved in two crashes since October that killed 346 people.

The aviation panel of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is questioning Daniel Elwell, acting head of the [Federal Aviation Administration](#), which gave Boeing its seal of approval of the 737 Max jets in March 2017. Lawmakers are also hearing from National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Robert Sumwalt, whose agency investigates accidents and joined the probe of most recent crash in March.

“The FAA needs to fix its credibility problem,” Rep. Rick Larsen, a Washington state Democrat and chair of the subcommittee on aviation that called the hearing, said in prepared remarks.

Lawmakers are probing the officials on how much authority Boeing had in the certification of the planes and when the FAA expects the planes to fly again. Boeing and the FAA are facing several investigations into the certification process.

Investigators have pointed to erroneous sensor data that fed into an automated anti-stall system in the crashes shortly after takeoff in Indonesia in October and in Ethiopia in March. Some pilots said they weren’t aware the system, known as MCAS, existed on the planes until after the crash of the Lion Air flight in Indonesia.

Aviation authorities across the world, including the FAA, grounded the fleet of close to 400 Boeing 737 Max planes in March after the Ethiopian Airlines plane went down.

Boeing is working on a fix for the planes but the grounding has already pinched some airlines’ [revenue](#) and is threatening to crimp sales further if the planes remain off limits during the peak summer travel season. “If the public doesn’t feel safe about flying then they won’t fly,” Larsen said in his remarks.

Also on Wednesday morning, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation will hold a nomination hearing for [President Donald Trump’s pick](#) to run the FAA, former [Delta Air Lines](#) executive Stephen Dickson.