

5/7/2024

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

2024-91/11-8

To: Boeing Commercial Airplane Company

2102174

Info: FAA (AVP-1, AVP-200, AFS-200, AFS-900, AFS-260, AFS-100, AIR-720, AIR-780, AIR-360, SEA-AEG), A4A, ALPA, AMFA, ASAP, ATSG, CAPA, IAM, IBT, ICAO, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NTSB, PAMA, RAA, SWAPA, TWU

From: Becky L. Hooey, Director
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

Re: B737 MAX 9 Ground Plug Removal Procedure

We recently received ASRS reports describing a safety concern that may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the enclosed deidentified report.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dr. Becky Hooey at (408) 541-2854 or email at becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov.



Aviation Safety Reporting System
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



ACN 2102174

DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence 202403
Local Time Of Day 1801 to 2400

PLACE

Locale ZZZ.Airport
State US
Altitude - MSL 23000

ENVIRONMENT

Flight Conditions IMC

AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - TRACON ZZZ
Make Model Name B737 MAX 8
Operating Under FAR Part 121

COMPONENT 1

Aircraft Component Communication Systems

PERSON 1

Function - Flight Crew Captain
Function - Flight Crew Pilot Not Flying
ASRS Report Number 2102174

EVENTS

Anomaly Aircraft Equipment Problem - Less Severe
Anomaly Deviation - Altitude - Crossing Restriction Not Met
Anomaly Deviation - Altitude - Undershoot
Anomaly Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Clearance
Anomaly Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published
Material / Policy
Anomaly Ground Event / Encounter - Ground Equipment Issue
Detector - Person Flight Crew
Result - Flight Crew Overcame Equipment Problem

NARRATIVE 1

After being cleared direct to ZZZZZ on the arrival and cross it at 11,000 ft., we encountered a high pitch tone that had been building up after departing ZZZ [Airport]. Due to the high pitch tone encounter and late crossing restriction clearance, we arrived at the fix a little high. I contacted Maintenance the next day to find out the origin of the tone. It appears there could be a safety issue with the ground crew plug-ins on the MAX. Due to the height of the external jack, some ground crews use the nose gear access. Instead of pulling the cord near the base of the plug, it's pulled from several feet away, which breaks the tip of the plug off in the access. This creates a build-up in static noise, eventually becoming a high pitch tone. This causes a major distraction to crews due to the level of noise, making it difficult to communicate between crews and ATC.

Aircraft malfunction caused physiological distraction due to high pitched tone. Recommend training for the ground crew regarding the plug removal technique and the potential for a safety issue.

SYNOPSIS

B737 MAX 8 Captain reported a distracting high pitched tone on descent that led to being high on a fix. With the help of Maintenance, the reporter discovered that the problem may be caused by the ground crew's unsafe plug removal procedure.