EPISODE 267

[EPISODE]

[0:00:07] IP: Hello and welcome to episode 267 of AvTalk. I am Ian Petchenik, here, as always with –

[0:00:17] JR: Hello, Ian. Good to talk to you for the 267th time ever.

[0:00:23] IP: Because we don't talk outside of the podcast.

[0:00:25] JR: No. Little-known fact, I have never talked to Ian outside of the podcast. It's never happened.

[0:00:32] IP: I'm sure there's a podcast out there somewhere where the two hosts just don't even know each other.

[0:00:35] JR: That'd be weird.

[0:00:36] IP: It would be weird. I don't think people would listen to our podcast if we didn't actually talk to each other outside of the podcast.

[0:00:43] JR: No, that wouldn't be very good. I do talk to Ian quite frequently, actually.

[0:00:46] IP: Quite frequently.

[0:00:47] JR: Yeah. Usually about the things we're going to talk about together during this very podcast.

[0:00:52] IP: We do like to prepare just a little bit.

[0:00:54] JR: A little bit.

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[0:00:54] IP: Just a little bit. A good show this week. Some interesting things happening in the aviation industry. Before we get started with any new business, I just want to remind people that there is still time to get in the contest to win a signed copy of Scott Bateman's new book, *Hercules*, about the Hercules. If you haven't listened to episode 265 from a few weeks ago, go check that out, because that tells you everything you need to know about how great the book is, how wonderful Scott is, and how you can enter to win a signed copy of Scott's book.

[0:01:33] JR: There are some pretty good entries. So, if you haven't entered yet and you're going to, step it up a bit. You got some competition.

[0:01:43] IP: Yeah. Okay. Now, as if there isn't enough going on with Boeing, this week, the Wall Street Journal broke news that the FAA is investigating Boeing, because workers in their South Carolina final assembly line falsified 787 inspection records.

[0:02:07] JR: Oh, boy. That's not good.

[0:02:10] IP: There is a required inspection of the wing-to-body joint that needs to be completed, that some employees were not performing, but then recording the work as having been performed.

[0:02:29] JR: That is not good. We only know of this, because a letter, an internal letter to Boeing employees was sent out, apparently. There has been, as far as I know, no press release issued by Boeing, no media outreach, no interviews on CNBC, or anything. This is still very much an evolving matter. The letter used some uncharacteristically affirmative language, saying that there wasn't some alleged irregularities, or this wasn't reported possibility that somebody had falsified records. This was saying, this happened. We know this happened. We thank the people who spoke up and the leadership who spoke up and raised the alarm, but this is indeed a thing that happened.

Part of me wants to, I guess, be rest assured that it's good that Boeing is taking this seriously, that they're not being wishy-washy on it and they know this happened, so they're going to deal with it. On the other hand, man, this is just all sorts of bad.

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[0:03:34] IP: It's just another thing on the pile, as far as all of the problems facing Boeing right now. They just don't need that.

[0:03:43] JR: Yeah. What's doubly concerning is that it is not a rogue employee. It is not a person that was stirring company policy, or really the regulations and falsifying records here. The letter says, several people had been violating company policies by not performing a required test. Several could mean anything. It could mean two. It could mean 50. We don't know. The details are very, very light at this time. We also don't know when this happened. We know that it happened at notification from the employee who observed this was brought up recently, because we can pretty much identify when 787 deliveries stopped pretty quickly and haven't resumed since, and we'll talk about that maybe in a minute. But we don't know when this happened.

I would say, if this happened this year, any time this year, pretty much the entire year falls after the Alaska Airlines 73 MAX incident, that is egregious that any employee would have falsified anything safety related after the Alaska blowout incident. I'm hoping that this is something that was caught last year and we're just figuring it out now. I don't know. The timeline isn't really working out in Boeing's favor, seeing that they were delivering 787s up until the middle of last month and haven't since. It either was discovered last year and took a really long time to work up the executive ladder to get the deliveries actually halted, or this was a much more recent issue. I'm not sure which is worse. They're both bad.

[0:05:18] IP: To Jason's point about the 787 deliveries, there was a lot of interest among those who follow Boeing and those who report on Boeing about the discrepancy between what Boeing's intended rate for 787 production and delivery was, and what the current 787 production and delivery rate is. Now, we know. The number of 787s built and delivered just didn't match what Boeing's targets were. This feeds into that.

According to Boeing, it's not an immediate safety of flight issue. We've heard that phrase, I think, maybe far too often, but they do need to go back and do the work, before they can get these planes out the door. We'll see how long that takes. We'll also see what the FAA investigation turns out. Because certainly, the FAA is already looking into basically, how Boeing

manufactures aircraft, writ-large. Boeing's plan to figure all of this out that is due to the FAA is due very shortly. That timeline is almost up. They've really got to get this figured out.

[0:06:41] JR: That's just regarding the FAA. We also have the DOJ, the Department of Justice to consider as well, the deferred prosecution agreement, which we remember expired just shortly after the Alaska blowout incident.

[0:06:54] IP: Was set to expire.

[0:06:55] JR: Was set to expire. Yes. If the timeline here plays out that Boeing had several people violating company policies by not performing test and forging paperwork, that is also something that might trigger the DOJ to look back at prosecuting somebody at Boeing. I believe that determination will happen by the end of May of this year. That happens relatively soon. We should hear by the end of this month if anything is going to happen, and if anything is going to happen, what will happen? I don't really expect much to come out of that. This probably could not have come at a worse time.

[0:07:33] IP: Yeah. I mean, the FAA, the plan to fix Boeing is due May 29th. The annual meeting of Boeing shareholders is the 17th of May. The DOJ investigation on whether to continue investigating is said to be wrapping up around the end of May. This month is a crucial month for Boeing.

[0:08:03] JR: Yeah. That's not even considering, May 17th is also the new, new-new launch date for Starliner. Since that launch was scrubbed earlier this week, not due to presumably a Boeing issue. It’s a problem with the launch vehicle. Now, that rescheduled date is no earlier than May 17th, 6.16 p.m. May 17th could be a very busy day for Boeing.

[0:08:27] IP: Big day for Boeing.

[0:08:28] JR: Big day. Big, big day.

[0:08:30] IP: Speaking of, well, let's just keep going with the Boeing theme for right now, because we've got a few stories this week. Spirit AeroSystems, the maker of the 737 fuselage,

some of the 787 fuselage, as well as, let's not forget the wings for the A220, which is another story that we'll get to in a bit. Spirit reported their first quarter earnings, or rather the lack thereof. In the first quarter of 2024, Spirit AeroSystems lost 617 million dollars, which is nearly as much as the company lost in all of 2023.

In their investor presentation for the first quarter, Spirit estimated their 787-fuselage ship sets, that's a fun phrase, to now be 50 for the year, instead of 80, which goes back to what we talked about at the top of the show. Now we know why. The other thing that slowed Spirit's work down was the new inspection criteria for all the 737 fuselages. There is a new, what Spirit calls a fundamentally changed inspection process, where Spirit and Boeing are going through each fuselage before it leaves Wichita and is put on a train and sent to Renton, where it's assembled into a fully-fledged airplane. Those inspections are much more rigorous now, because the wonderful, wonderful phrase, traveled work is key.

The idea is to eliminate as much as possible the amount of work that needs to be done on the fuselages after they arrive in Washington, so that there isn't work being done out of sequence, so there aren't failures to actually complete work, like the likely case with the Alaska Airlines 737 MAX 9, where the bolts just weren't re-installed on the mid cabin exit door plug. The idea here is that quality will improve. Spirit says, that there is a 26-zone production verification process in place now. This has slowed things down, but Spirit says that quality is up. There's a 15% improvement in quality, because of these inspections. It sounds like it's working.

[0:11:04] JR: Yeah. I don't know what to make of it. Why weren't they doing these inspections previously? It sounds like, those used car commercials, or certified pre-owned car commercials where they're like, "We do a 71-point inspection before we deliver your used car to you." Great. I would expect you to do that. I'm buying something very expensive. Please, do your 26-point inspection before you deliver your airplane fuselage to Boeing. Sounds like a good idea. What were they doing before? Nothing? 12, 5, 0? It seems like 0.

[0:11:36] IP: I think the thing here is that Boeing and Spirit employees are now doing this together.

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[0:11:45] JR: Presumably, some airline engineers as well, either on delivery of those frames in Renton, or in Wichita. I don't know if any airline actually has anyone stationed in Wichita. I think they may just be doing that out in Renton, but it wouldn't shock me if they want someone down there in Wichita as well.

[0:12:05] IP: At this point, no, it would not. Speaking of airlines, Alaska Airlines has received a 61-million-dollar store credit from Boeing in addition to the 162 million dollars in cash that Boeing gave Alaska in the first quarter as part of compensation for the MAX 9 grounding.

[0:12:29] JR: That's great. I hope that store credit doesn't expire anytime soon. They might want to hold on to that. Let it appreciate for a while.

[0:12:37] IP: It's good for one airplane in the continental U.S. only, economy class.

[0:12:42] JR: So many black outdates.

[0:12:44] IP: And black outdates, absolutely. That's where we are with Alaska, getting some of its money back. Meanwhile, ultra-low-cost carrier, Allegiant, is still going, “Hey, we would like some airplanes, please.”

[0:13:00] JR: Yeah, of the MAX variety.

[0:13:02] IP: Of the MAX variety. They're still waiting for their first 737 MAX. They were supposed to get them last year, then they were supposed to get them early this year. Now, they'll get them at some point.

[0:13:16] JR: At some point. Very different Allegiant now than in the years past. They have also taken delivery of new build Airbus aircraft. Now they're learning the hard way how taking new delivery aircraft, it can also be problematic. A long way from their MD-80 days. But their introduction of the MAX has not been great. But hey, I hear they're going to install USB ports on these 73 MAXs. Even an ultra-low-cost carrier can bring some niceties to the experience these days, which is nice. They just have to take delivery of that thing.

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[0:13:51] IP: At this point, the in-seat power is not niceties. It's necessities.

[0:13:57] JR: It's a lot to Ryanair. We're still a little bit away from this becoming an accepted necessity at airlines. But any little bit helps.

[0:14:05] IP: Ryanair is an outlier in a variety of ways. I think more and more, in-seat power is a necessity.

[0:14:14] JR: We'll keep our eyes on Frontier. When they do it, you know it's made it big.

[0:14:21] IP: I mean, there is that. Okay, that's enough of a Boeing talk for today. I think one day we'll get to an episode where –

[0:14:29] JR: No. We got some more Boeing stuff later, but the non-innocuous items. They're fine.

[0:14:34] IP: Right, right. In Brazil, record rainfall has closed Porto Alegre's airport for the month pretty much.

[0:14:45] JR: Yikes.

[0:14:46] IP: The NOTAM closes the airport through the 30th of May, and there is a lot, a lot, a lot of water, which is –

[0:14:53] JR: Yeah. I saw a video earlier where I had to actually look at a map to make sure like, “Oh, no. This aircraft isn't in the airport. It must have overrun the runway and ended up in a lake, because it looks like it's flooding.” Nope. It is not an airport directly adjacent to any body of water. There is, I think, a river nearby, but it is not – it doesn't run up against the airport, so that's a lot of water.

[0:15:16] IP: Flooding has been absolutely devastating to the region. There has been a lot of aid moving in. It looks like the airport, or at least part of the airfield is usable at this point,

because the Brazilian military has been flying aid in, but as far as commercial operations go, it's going to be a while.

Earlier today, in fact, in Istanbul, a FedEx 767 landed without its nose gear deployed. Quite successfully, I might add. As Jason pointed out, well done to the pilots and well done to the CCTV operator.

[0:15:51] JR: Yeah. I'm not sure exactly what tech they were using to capture that bay. It looked like it was just one long continuous camera view down the runway. Someone actually asked me on Twitter earlier today, does Istanbul have one of those interesting high-tech virtual air traffic control towers where they have a 360 panoramic view and they can look at really any point? I don't think so. I think they just have some really good CCTV there. But it did give us a really good look at the 767 being expertly put down right in the centerline. Then the fire trucks and the crews almost immediately laying down some, I don't think it was foam. It may have just been water, to cool the aircraft and put out any fire that may have broken out. It was all just really orchestrated quite well.

[0:16:37] IP: They did a very nice job, I have to say. Just an absolutely fantastic job of setting the aircraft down. Then, yeah, the firefighters, they were ready.

[0:16:48] JR: They were there. They set a new standard for how I want to document and see events like this. I now expect every incident on a runway to be documented in high-definition 360-degree CCTV, because it was pretty nice.

[0:17:04] IP: I mean, the only thing that was missing was the high-def sound, I guess.

[0:17:09] JR: Oh, yeah. Yeah, that'd be nice. A lot of grinding noises.

[0:17:12] IP: Somebody get out to assemble with a boom mic. Jason?

[0:17:16] JR: Yes.

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[0:17:16] IP: Fortunately, for FedEx, it seems like, they'll be able to continue buying 767s from Boeing for a few more years.

[0:17:27] JR: But they may not be able to fly it to Istanbul. This is going to get real tricky. An article comes to us from Jon Ostrower at The Air Current, because of course, it does. There are international regulations in place that would more or less prevent Boeing, or any other aircraft manufacturer from producing older-gen engine-powered aircraft starting in 2028. The 767, as we know today, really only being produced as freighters, or the military variants, and come 2028, they turn into a pumpkin. No more can be produced.

However, it is possible that they'll get a little extension here in the US. However, because those aircraft will not comply with international civil aviation organization agreements, they would not be able to be operated internationally. That is interesting. The reprieve, as Jon puts it, would go to 2033, which coincides magically when Boeing thinks it might be able to turn out a 787 freighter. Now, isn't that interesting timing?

[0:18:34] IP: Huh, that's interesting. How about that?

[0:18:37] JR: Yeah, very interesting.

[0:18:38] IP: It’s almost like, they're dovetailed to each other.

[0:18:41] JR: Weird.

[0:18:41] IP: I mean, it makes sense to me to keep the 767 line going. I mean, the 767 is nearly indestructible. I mean, it's just such a –

[0:18:53] JR: Also, it has proven that many times.

[0:18:55] IP: Yeah, right? United recently proved it. It's such a good airplane. I had a conversation with our resident numbers expert, Gavin Werbeloff, earlier today after this news broke. He brought up a good point. When you run the numbers on how much cargo the 767

freighter can carry, the fuel efficiency is actually higher than some of the newer aircraft that can continue to be sold and operated.

[0:19:24] JR: That's interesting.

[0:19:26] IP: It really all depends on how you're measuring emissions and how you are accounting for that. It's interesting to me that they're going to keep building this. I don't think the timeline is any wonder, based on what we've seen with Boeing's ability to produce new aircraft, or get programs off the ground. But it'll be interesting to see how many aircraft come off the line if this does go through. This isn't a done deal. This is in the FAA reauthorization for this year. It's not necessarily done deal yet, because the final bill hasn't been presented, but it seems like it is a distinct possibility.

[0:20:05] JR: Yeah. I have not seen this one get much play. If the authorization bill does go through, which at this point, who knows? It looks like, they're going to have to extend the current bill again, before they put through the final fresh bill. I don't think this one's really a point of contention.

[0:20:22] IP: No. I think there's bipartisan support for this particular –

[0:20:25] JR: Or just no support. Someone stuck it in, and nobody cares enough to argue about this one.

[0:20:30] IP: There is a lot of that. We're going to talk about this one, mostly because a bunch of people sent it in. I think it's worth noting that it wasn't the aircraft's fault. Earlier this week, a Delta A321neo in Seattle suffered a fire of sorts after landing and after the aircraft was connected to a ground power unit, a fire broke out near the nose of the aircraft. As a precautionary measure, the crew evacuated via slides. No one was injured, either in the fire, or as far as I've heard, in the evacuation, though that is often the case where people are injured in the evacuation, not because of the reason to evacuate. The fire centered on the ground power unit. They are continuing to investigate, but it wasn't an issue with the aircraft itself.

[0:21:20] JR: That's good. That's good. Really, anytime you hear a 321neo in the news, you immediately think, “Oh, no. What did Pratt do this time?” But it wasn't their fault this time.

[0:21:29] IP: It wasn't their fault. It was whoever –

[0:21:31] JR: That’s good.

[0:21:31] IP: - whoever makes the ground power unit, or services the ground power unit, or –

[0:21:35] JR: Plugged it in.

[0:21:35] IP: - touched the wires together. We don't know. That's why they investigate these things. But it doesn't seem that it was the aircraft. We talked about Bonza last week. They suspended operations with almost no notice. That's because they got their planes taken away. The lessor that owns for the Bonza aircraft that were actually operating for Bonza in Australia, AIP Capital, told the carrier that they were taking their planes back. Then yesterday, on the 7th of May, lessor said, “They will continue to enforce the rights under the termination notices.” It doesn't sound like Bonza is going to get its planes back. It sounds like the airline is, in fact, done for. The airline was operating six 737 MAX. Two of those were operating for Flair in Canada. The four that were actually operating for Bonza are now being shopped out to other airlines.

[0:22:39] JR: Yeah, a lot going on as well with the owner of that company. 777 Partners, also, I think, under investigation in a 600-million-dollar fraud case?

[0:22:51] IP: I feel like that might have something to do with it. The saga of 777 Partners, their operations, their business model, and how they've conducted their business. I feel like, that could be its own episode of the podcast.

[0:23:06] JR: Yeah. Don't really know enough about them. But now, I feel like, I need to go figure out some more, because this is –

[0:23:12] IP: Next week at a special episode, Jason will – No. But I have a feeling we're going to be talking more about them as their other businesses, perhaps, experience hardship.

[0:23:24] JR: Yes. If you are flying Flair anytime soon, I would say, keep your eyes on the news, because of if Bonza's taken out like this so quickly, Flair might be the next victim. I hope not. I think, well, according to the bastion of accuracy, 777 Partners only owns 25% of Flair. There is hope yet for that particular airline.

[0:23:49] IP: Staying in Australia, Qantas was fined this week a 100 million Australian dollars, which is approximately 60, 67 million US dollars for selling tickets on flights that it had already decided, or already canceled, and canceling more flights without promptly telling ticket holders. This goes back to the somewhat during early post COVID days when flying was just getting back going in Australia. Qantas originally vehemently denied the charges. Then former Qantas chairman, Alan Joyce, “abruptly retired” two months before he was supposed to.

[0:24:37] JR: See you later.

[0:24:38] IP: Handed over the reins to the new CEO. Now, Qantas has not contested the Australian competition and consumer commissions claims. A 100 million Australian dollar fine, plus 20 million Australian dollars in restitution to 86,000 passengers who bought tickets on those already canceled flights. Customers who purchase domestic tickets are going to get $250 a piece and international travelers will get about $450 per ticket.

[0:25:10] JR: Yeah. Not a ton. Better than nothing.

[0:25:12] IP: Moving on from there. Yeah.

[0:25:15] JR: Yeah. But good that this finally came to a conclusion. We had been hearing about this for years, since COVID, and the particularly troublesome wrap up of aviation in that region hit Qantas and Virgin Australia pretty hard. I mean, Virgin Australia is a shell of its former self. It's barely recognizable. But at Qantas, this was pretty inexcusable. Selling tickets on flights they knew would be canceled is not something that should happen. I understand if it happens momentarily before you're able to pull down inventory. But if a flight is canceled, you zero out the inventory, stop selling tickets. It's not that hard. Airlines do it all the time. Yes, it was the Wild West days of post-COVID, where airlines were really scrambling to figure out what they were

going to do with their airplanes, when they were going to fly and things were really not firmed up, until very shortly before the date of flight. This was inexcusable. Apparently, the Australian competition and consumer commission believed so as well.

[0:26:13] IP: There you go. Qantas for its part says, that they have implemented new technologies to ensure that this never, ever, ever happens again.

[0:26:21] JR: Sure.

[0:26:22] IP: There you go.

[0:26:24] JR: Good. It shouldn't have happened in the first place. Hopefully, it doesn't happen again.

[0:26:27] IP: Jason?

[0:26:28] JR: Yes.

[0:26:29] IP: You didn't happen to place an order for 51 A321neos, did you?

[0:26:33] JR: 51? No. No.

[0:26:35] IP: Yes. 51. No.

[0:26:37] JR: If you found my order, it's different. I would know, because 51, that number is too weird. Who places an order for 51 –

[0:26:43] IP: You think it's like a buy 50, get one free kind of thing?

[0:26:46] JR: I mean, didn't JAL just place an order for 21 A350s, or something like that? We know why. But is there any airline out there that –

[0:26:54] IP: 19. It was 19.

[0:26:55] JR: - lost a A321neo recently and needs to top up 50 plus one? I don't think so. But if you ordered 51 A321neos, please reach out, because we'd love to talk to you and find out how did you do that?

[0:27:11] IP: That would be a fun conversation to have. Why 51?

[0:27:13] JR: Why 51? But we don't know who. We don't know for delivery when. All we know is an undisclosed customer ordered a pretty sizable number of 321neos. Eventually, at some point, someone will come forward and say, “It was me.”

[0:27:29] IP: I bet we'll hear more about this at Farmborough.

[0:27:33] JR: Maybe. Maybe from a certain Chicago-based airline, perhaps. All eyes on them. Any order for a 321neo, I would expect people to be eyeballing United. But I wouldn't expect them to be coming forward at a point later in the future. Why not now? If United ordered these, I'd expect them to say, “Hey, look. Look what we did. We ordered these.” But somebody ordered them and we'll find out who, eventually.

[0:27:58] IP: Eventually. Well, a few weeks after the first Emirates A350 rolled out of the paint shop in Toulouse, we finally know where the A350 will fly for Emirates. They have 65 on order, but they're going to get their first near the end of the year. Emirates is going to keep them close to home. From the 15th of September, Emirates is going to fly to Bahrain, and they are going to go to Kuwait City on the 16th of September. Then in October, they'll go to Mumbai and Ahmadabad. Then for their first European routes in November, they'll head to Edinburgh, Lyon, and Bologna. Some cool cities that Emirates is going to be serving with the A350.

[0:28:54] JR: Yeah. It's the long route, Dubai to Bahrain is interesting, because it's a pretty short flight. It's under an hour, but it's just such an odd smattering of aircraft. Yeah, it's as typical with Emirates. I forgot they even have the 777LR, which is not a very common aircraft these days, flying all the way to Bahrain. Nice –

[0:29:17] IP: Really stretching its legs.

[0:29:18] JR: Yeah, really stretching it. I think every now and then, they send an A380 to Bahrain during some special events. But nice to know finally, where the first route will be for the Emirates A350. If you find yourself on one of those Emirates A380s, or 777-300ERs in the near future, you should know that they are now refurbishing additional aircraft, 71 of them, in addition to what they were already refurbishing, bringing it up to a total of 191 aircraft. This is not something Emirates seems to want to do, but it's something Emirates seems to need to do, because the 777X is delayed until possibly the end of time. No one really knows. So, Emirates has to do something in the meantime to bring its aircraft up to snub. Because if you've ever been on the 300ER, or any 777 for that matter in business class on Emirates, it's a very dated but nice product. It is not competitive anymore.

They see that, so they are being forced to spend many, many millions of dollars to refurbish these aircraft. The first one happening this coming summer, I think. That's exciting. Expect to see the 300ER in Emirates' fleet for many, many years to come still.

[0:30:32] IP: Yeah. I mean, this week, the chatter is 2026 for entry into service of the 777X. We'll see how that plays out.

[0:30:42] JR: Maybe.

[0:30:43] IP: Maybe. Production is ramping up for the Comac C919. Maybe.

[0:30:53] JR: Maybe Not quite sure. This comes to us from Reuters, that apparently, one of the project contractors has said that Comac is expanding the production facilities for the C919 in Shanghai, I believe, in Pudong, up to possibly 150 aircraft per year in the next five years. Within five years, maybe 150 C919s a year. That's a lot. That is a lot of aircraft that up until last week had almost no demand. China is pushing very hard to market the aircraft outside of Asia and even get it certified. In Europe, I don't know if they've even broached that topic for the US FAA at this point. But they're taking this program very seriously. 150 a year is nothing to sneeze at.

[0:31:47] IP: No, no. I mean, that's a healthy production rate.

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[0:31:49] JR: Yeah, let's see. 150 by 12. That's 12 and a half aircraft a month. What's Boeing at right now with the 73? About –

[0:31:59] IP: Technically 38. But it's fewer than that.

[0:32:01] JR: Yeah. It is not 38. It is something lower than that.

[0:32:06] IP: It's, yeah. Listed at 38.

[0:32:08] JR: Yeah, but it's Chinese coming for them.

[0:32:10] IP: When you see guys weight in sports, his height and weight is always just a little, a little off. Last week, we talked about JetBlue bringing back its oldest A320s, basically buying out lease returns and keeping those aircraft around for who knows how long. This week, they have added a slew of routes, cut a slew of routes, and Jason has the details.

[0:32:38] JR: I do. In JetBlue's new found quest to make money and be an airline that knows what it wants to do with itself, they have made some pretty major changes, a major San Juan expansion, really going after some Frontier routes here. Providence, Cancun, interestingly, Westchester, just north of New York. That's an interesting one. Also, introducing mint service to a bunch of new routes. JFK to San Juan, apparently didn't have mint service, which is their fancy business class service and also adding new mint routes, JFK to Vancouver, which is interesting. Fort Lauderdale-Phoenix, Fort Lauderdale-Las Vegas, Boston-Phoenix, JFK-Phoenix.

But they're also making some cuts, which I think is more important here. They're drawing down some winter transatlantic flying. I think the Gatwick service gets eliminated entirely in the winter season and Paris, I think goes from 2X to 1X per day. Oh, I have it right in front of me. Boston to Gatwick is now a winter seasonal suspension. JFK to Gatwick is also suspended. JFK to CDG goes down to once a day. They're also entirely exiting Newark and Orlando to LAX. They'll exit that market entirely. Also, they are gutting service at LaGuardia, not unexpected since the unceremonious ending of the Northeast Alliance with American Airlines. Those slots have to

return to American. JetBlue will stop operating LaGuardia to Atlanta, New Orleans at Nassau, Bahamas, RSW at, what is that? That's Florida. Tampa?

[0:34:24] IP: Fort Myers.

[0:34:25] JR: Fort Myers. Thank you. Boston to LaGuardia is a frequency reduction. All sorts of cuts presumably being made, partially because of the Northeast Alliance ending and also, maybe these routes just weren't profitable. I don't know. But big, big changes to the JetBlue schedule. If you have a JetBlue flight booked at the end of October or later, you might want to check in the coming days for a change in your schedule, because there's a lot of stuff happening.

[0:34:51] IP: A lot, a lot, a lot of moving parts there. We close the show with news, I guess. I don't understand what's happening here.

[0:35:00] JR: I don't know what this is, but it was funny enough to mention.

[0:35:03] IP: Yeah, funny enough to mention, and I'm sure we'll come back to it when they do something with it eventually, maybe? I don't know. But the FAA has approved Frontier's use of the mark Frontera!, a trade name.

[0:35:19] JR: Will they be serving tortas if you fly to Chicago? What is this?

[0:35:24] IP: I don't know. I don’t know. Interestingly, they also re-upped their –

[0:35:29] JR: Code share.

[0:35:29] IP: - their code share with – why can't I remember the name of the airline?

[0:35:33] JR: Volaris?

[0:35:35] IP: Thank you. But no mention of Frontera there. Maybe –

[0:35:38] JR: No. I'm not sure what this is, but it's certainly something.

[0:35:43] IP: Well, we'll see. I just thought it was a neat little thing to end the show. If you know what Frontier is up to with a new trade name, Frontera!, by all means, let us know. Now that we've talked about Frontera, I am indeed hungry for some tortas. This has been episode 267 of AvTalk. I am Ian Petchenik, here, as always with –

[0:36:08] JR: Jason Rabinowitz. Thanks for listening.

[END]