

**EPISODE 273**

[EPISODE]

**[0:00:07] IP:** Hello and welcome to episode 273 of AvTalk. I am Ian Petchenik, here, as always with –

**[0:00:16] JR:** Jason Rabinowitz. Hello, Ian. How's it going?

**[0:00:19] IP:** It's going well, Jason. How are you, sir?

**[0:00:22] JR:** I'm good. It's a couple hours later than we usually record, and I thought something, anything would come out in the news in the three hours that we usually miss, but surprisingly, nothing's happened.

**[0:00:37] IP:** You had to say that, didn't you?

**[0:00:38] JR:** I need something. Something new.

**[0:00:40] IP:** Oh, man. All right. Well, we'll see what happens. We'll see what happens while we're talking. It is Wednesday, the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. It's in the evening, so we'll see what news breaks. Well, Jason and I are talking, because he had to go and say something. We begin this week in Washington DC, as Boeing CEO Dave Calhoun was in front of the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee permanent select subcommittee on investigations. That's a mouthful.

**[0:01:11] JR:** Yeah. That's how you know you're in bad shape.

**[0:01:15] IP:** This was a hearing in front of some of Boeing's most vocal Senate critics, including Senator Blumenthal and Senator Hawley, in a hearing entitled Boeing's Broken Safety Culture. We didn't really learn anything new out of this particular hearing. There was a lot of senators berating Calhoun. There wasn't much in the way of new news about anything, as far as what improvements specifically Boeing is targeting for the long term, or anything that we've learned in

the past. There was talk about new whistleblowers coming forward. Though at this point, I mean –

**[0:01:58] JR:** Who isn't a whistleblower at this point? These committee, these things, these hearings, the purpose of them is not to reveal new information, or to effect any changes, basically, just for the senators to get their punches in, and I don't know, make some news titles for themselves. Got some good sound bites out of it, I guess, but nothing substantive.

**[0:02:20] IP:** Yeah. I think that about clarifies everything about that. The thing that we've really learned this week is that nobody really wants the Boeing CEO job. Calhoun's done at the end of the year.

**[0:02:31] JR:** I mean, presumably. But at this rate, maybe not.

**[0:02:34] IP:** Reports throughout the week have just ticked off the boxes of who doesn't want to be the CEO of Boeing.

**[0:02:42] JR:** Telling you, would have made a good TV show.

**[0:02:44] IP:** It still could. I mean, at this point, it still could. We don't know. It'll be interesting to see how these things progress. Not much in the way of news, but if you do want to hear a bunch of senators shout at Dave Calhoun and Dave Calhoun sit there and take it for the most part, then you can watch the replay of the hearing.

The one thing I did want to point out was an exchange that Calhoun had with, and I forget which senator was it. I think it was Senator Hawley, who was listing off a variety of issues with Boeing and Calhoun's response was, "That's not the Boeing I know." I don't think Hawley was off base in what he was describing. I thought it was a weird response.

**[0:03:31] JR:** What were some of the things that Hawley was saying, or accusing Boeing –

**[0:03:34] IP:** He was basically, just listing what had happened since 2019, and the first MAX crash. He was basically, just listing the problems that Boeing has experienced.

**[0:03:46] JR:** Maybe if Calhoun is saying, "That's not the Boeing I know," maybe that's part of the problem.

**[0:03:50] IP:** Well, the one thing I think that maybe Calhoun was objecting to is that Hawley was hitting on the fact that whistleblowers have been retaliated against, which at this point, I mean, is – he wasn't even getting into the conspiracy theories, or anything about that over the past few months, but the people who have said things are not right and need fixing have been either demoted, reassigned, fired, things like that. I think, Calhoun was objecting to that. Writ large, I mean, it was the Boeing I think we all know. I bring all of this up to say that, how long are we going to keep doing this? Because it's not changing –

**[0:04:32] JR:** It's not dragging Boeing into the court of public opinion, or not really a court at all. Just being yelled at by senators, congresspeople, whomever, I do feel we've done this quite a number of times at this point. It's good in the way that they have typically have the family members of the MAX crashes in the room with them. I think, Calhoun did at one point turn around, look them in the –

**[0:04:59] IP:** He did. He did directly address them

**[0:04:59] JR:** - group aisle and acknowledged their presence, which hasn't always been the case in the past. At least there's that. But yeah, this is a CEO doing the job of a CEO. When your company is called to testify in front of Congress or whatever you would call this, that's what they do. But change doesn't happen this way. It's just senators doing senator thing, or congresspeople doing congresspeople thing, and we move on. The hunt for the next CEO continues. Again, don't know who that'll be, but we know who it won't be.

**[0:05:33] IP:** We know who it won't be. Last week, we talked about Elliott Investment Management's new stake in Southwest Airlines. This week, we get to talk about what happened to Southwest Airlines over the rest of the week, as far as the news is concerned, because it was a lot. Now, granted, none of the events that we're going to talk about happened within the last week. They just became public. We'll start with what Southwest pilots described as a Dutch roll during a May 25<sup>th</sup> flight.

**[0:06:09] JR:** Ian, why don't you educate us on what a Dutch roll is. Putting you on the spot.

**[0:06:14] IP:** What I was going to say is that we're not sure if it was in fact a Dutch roll. The NTSB is calling it an oscillation event. We'll have to wait for the flight data recorder data to understand if this was in fact a Dutch roll.

**[0:06:30] JR:** Which, by the way, the NTSB does have the flight data recorder, but they were quite clear to point out quite front and center saying, the cockpit voice recorder, unfortunately, was not maintained. They do not have that. I did want to make a point of that, because the NTSB is making a point of putting that in all its preliminary reports to explicitly call out when the CVR is not available, because it was overwritten

**[0:06:54] IP:** Dutch roll is when the aircraft is rolling and yawing at the same time. It's a yaw roll coupling together. I mean, you need three dimensions to describe it, and hopefully, no one listening has ever experienced it outside of maybe the pilots listening to the podcast. But if you've ever been on a bike and it's been wet and bumpy, that's the best I can come up with. I don't know. Jason, do you, like a better way to describe it?

**[0:07:32] JR:** No. It's really hard to describe –

**[0:07:36] IP:** You need three dimensions.

**[0:07:36] JR:** - audibly what this is. You need the gift that's on Wikipedia, because it's one of the few pages I stumble upon that really, just sums it up with a nice little animated JPEG.

**[0:07:47] IP:** Hey, how about we just put it in the show notes and save ourselves the fall?

**[0:07:50] JR:** Perfect. You can read about the history of the terminology, Dutch roll, which apparently, nobody actually knows where that term came from.

**[0:07:58] IP:** There you go. We'll save that one for another time. But this happened on Southwest flight 746 on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, between Phoenix and Oakland at about 34,000 feet.

The NTSB says, "Following the event, Southwest performed a maintenance on the airplane and discovered damage to structural components." The NTSB didn't specify which, but multiple outlets have reported that the damage involved the backup power control unit.

**[0:08:28] JR:** Stand by power control unit.

**[0:08:30] IP:** Stand by power control unit. But what no one has said is whether or not they think it was damaged and that's what caused the incident, or if it was damaged in the incident. We'll wait for the NTSB report on that. That was number one. Number two was an April 11<sup>th</sup> event in Hawaii. Southwest flight 2786 was flying out of Honolulu for Lihue, and was flying in bad weather. They knew it was going to be bad weather. The pilots briefed beforehand and said, "We're probably going to have to do a go around."

Now, let me back up and say that we know all of this, because after the incident, which we'll discuss in just a second, the pilots filed an aviation safety action program report, or an ASAP report. An ASAP report is a report that pilots, or other qualified aviation folks, you have to be part of a program, but most major airlines are part of this ASAP program with the FAA. They can file these reports to improve safety, even if they've done something wrong that would break federal air regulations. Even if they did something that they weren't supposed to do, they can file these safety reports and it's a way of preventing future accidents and incidents by encouraging these voluntary reports, so that they can be read, understood, and then acted upon to make sure that these things don't happen again.

We learned about the incident first from Bloomberg news, which got a hold of the internal report that Southwest issued to all of its pilots after the ASAP report was filed. In the ASAP report, the pilots were taking off in bad weather, they knew they were going to be approaching Lihue in bad weather as well, they probably weren't going to be able to see the runway at minimums, so they briefed a go around. Everything was going as expected until then. The first officer who was flying did not have the runway in sight by minimums and called the go around. Then during the go around, the first officer, and I'm quoting the Southwest internal report here, "Inadvertently pushed forward on the control column, while following thrust lever movement commanded by the auto throttle."

What this did is it increased the aircraft's speed and the first officer responded by reducing thrust. That led to the aircraft descending. The aircraft descended at a maximum descent rate, and this is according to Southwest report, 4,400 feet per minute in the descent, and descended to nearly 400 feet above the ocean surface. The crew received ground proximity warning system alerts, and they resolved those by increasing the thrust pulling back on the control column and ascending, reaching a maximum vertical rate of 8,500 feet per minute.

**[0:11:33] JR:** Whoa. That's a lot.

**[0:11:36] IP:** This was a roller coaster in the clouds.

**[0:11:38] JR:** Yeah. And really low in the clouds, because 400 feet, I know they were on approach, so it probably – 400 feet sounds really scary, but it probably wasn't all that much below the glide slope for that approach, but 400 feet above ground level, which in this case isn't ground, it's water, while descending at that rate, while pushing down on the column and reducing speed, that is a recipe for potential disaster. Thankfully, in this case, the ground proximity warning system worked. The captain onboard who took charge and got them out of that situation in the most rapid way possible. There's a lot to digest in this report, but this is, like you said, Ian, the industry doing what it should do that the flight crew recognized that something did not go to plan here, so they filed an ASAP report.

Then Southwest internalized it, figured out what went on, and made the information available internally to all its pilots saying, "Hey, this happened. Maybe make sure that doesn't happen again." This is good.

**[0:12:42] IP:** Yeah. This is how the system is –

**[0:12:44] JR:** It doesn't make it less scary.

**[0:12:46] IP:** No. It certainly doesn't make it less scary, but this is how the system is supposed to work. It's really interesting to get insight into how these systems are designed, and how they end up improving safety. Because now, there are quite a few things that Southwest has and can

do to address the issues that were raised by this particular flight. It's an interesting insight into something we don't normally get to see.

**[0:13:14] JR:** Yeah, yeah. Thankfully, all is well that ends well here. But man, that inadvertently pushing down in the column and reducing thrust, we've seen when you add those things up what the end result is in the past. Thankfully, this isn't that reality.

**[0:13:28] IP:** Yes, yes. This was a much different result, which is everybody made it back to Honolulu safely for the first time. Then, the one thing I will bring up and the report notes is, and the flight tracking data that we have bears this out as well is they took off again, and the weather had gotten worse. Then they just held for a really long time and went back to Honolulu. The one narrative point that the first officer made was, he didn't really speak up about doing it again. Maybe this wasn't such a good idea.

**[0:13:58] JR:** Yeah. Well, at this rate, it doesn't feel like, Southwest is going to be doing too much more of this inter-island flying anyway.

**[0:14:05] IP:** That's a whole, whole different story.

**[0:14:07] JR:** Yeah.

**[0:14:08] IP:** The third thing that happened to Southwest isn't really Southwest specific at all. It just happened to have happened to Southwest. Two Southwest 737 MAX aircraft struck large birds in two separate cities. One in Havana and one in New Orleans. Both returned to their point of origin safely and no one was injured. But in both cases, the bird strikes damaged the oil sump in the engine, which led to oil entering the hot engine core, which led to smoke being fed into the cabin. In both cases, the pilots were able to deal with the issue and get everybody back on the ground safely and no one was injured.

After these incidents, which took place last year, Boeing issued a bulletin to operators of 737 MAX saying that smoke in the cabin should always be considered, reminding operators that smoke in the cabin should be considered engine severe damage, and using a specific checklist to shut down the engine, that includes pulling the fire handles, which stops the bleed air from

the engine coming into the cabin, leaving out the smoke. The bulletin also mentions a system called the load reduction device.

**[0:15:30] JR:** The what?

**[0:15:31] IP:** Exactly. The load reduction device. The LRD disconnects the fan blade from the rotor, and this information comes to us from Dominic Gates at the Seattle Times, who wrote a fascinating article, quite in depth, and we'll link to that in the show notes. The load reduction device disconnects the fan blades from the rotor and turns the fan to stop extreme vibrations from an imbalanced fan from affecting the aircraft. You've got a giant bird that's taken out a, or multiple fan blades, which now makes the fan completely unbalanced. If you've ever spun something and then nicked one of the blades, you'll watch it come out of –

**[0:16:09] JR:** An unbalanced bicycle wheel.

**[0:16:11] IP:** Yeah, exactly. Unbalanced washing machine, exactly. This stops the fan blade from moving and stops those extreme vibrations that can affect the aircraft. It turns out that pilots were not aware of the presence of the load reduction device on the CFM Leap engines.

**[0:16:33] JR:** Stop us if you've heard this narrative before.

**[0:16:36] IP:** This is a new feature on the Leap engines that is not present on the CFM 56 engines that are on the 737 NGs. It is however on the GENX engines and the GE 90s, which power the 787 and 777 respectively. Maintenance engineers are well aware of the LRD, because the engines, every time they're serviced, this is one of the things that they're looking at. Pilots have no control over the system. It activates automatically when the engine is shut down, but they're upset that they weren't aware of it. Pilots at Southwest and American Airlines which operates the 737 MAX as well have said, "Hey, it would be nice if you had told us about this."

**[0:17:22] JR:** Yeah. Feel like, we've heard this story before, and kina, woulda figured by now, there is no system onboard that aircraft from those to tail that the pilots operating it would not have known about. But here we are again. Feels a little different than MCAS, of course. This isn't a piece of code overriding the flight control system to the point where it crashes into the



ground twice. This is more, seems like a backup to a backup, where if the engine is truly done for that it just prevents further damage and there's nothing the pilots can do at that point. But I don't know. Maybe the difference is training between the NG and the MAX being done on an iPad in a couple hours. Maybe that wasn't sufficient. Maybe there should have been some more detailed learning going on at this point, really feel like there should be no more secrets system-wise on board the MAX. But man, the hits just keep on coming, don't they?

**[0:18:19] IP:** Yeah. I don't know where we go from there. But hopefully, this is one of those things where a bit of information will go a long way. Again, the pilots have absolutely no control over the system and doesn't affect anything, unless they've already shut down the engine. To me, this seems in a different realm. But again, I'm not in charge of operating the 737 MAX. I will say, if they're upset about it, I'm with them.

**[0:18:49] JR:** Yeah. We'll link to Dominic Gates's article in the Seattle Times, because it goes into pretty good depth into everything involving the bird strikes, the damage to the engine, which engine on which side of the aircraft feeds cabin air to which part of the cabin, which I thought was particularly interesting. I did not know that on the MAX. Yeah, but then goes into the LRD, the load reduction device. Just not great that there's still stuff the people flying the MAXs don't know about. Hopefully, the last time, we'll have to say that.

**[0:19:21] IP:** Yes. The New York Times broke news of some suspect titanium making its way into aircraft parts and aircraft via Spirit AeroSystems into Boeing and Airbus aircraft. This was titanium that was procured from a Chinese supplier, which eventually made its way down into the supply chain of both Boeing and Airbus through major supplier Spirit AeroSystems. The titanium itself is of aircraft grade, but it did not have the proper provenance paperwork that is necessary to certify that yes, this titanium does exactly what we say it does. It's acceptable through all tolerances and it can be installed on an aircraft. Both Boeing and Airbus and everybody else about say, there's no danger at this point. They're checking through things, and those parts will be removed as necessary. But another aircraft parts supplier forgery. The second big one in a year.

**[0:20:31] JR:** Not great that this keeps happening, but I think all these articles we read about these forged documentation suppliers that it really stresses the point that the industry needs to

go digital. It needs to do something to get away from what is apparently, very easy to forge actual, physical paperwork for supplies, because it ain't cutting it these days anymore. If a supplier like Spirit can source something as important and as critical as titanium and that paperwork is forged, that's not good. Things need to change and they need to change fast, because this is going to keep happening.

**[0:21:06] IP:** Yeah. This all came to light, because one person looked at the paperwork and said, "You know what? This doesn't look right."

**[0:21:15] JR:** That's good. Speaking up is good. I mean, the forged paperwork is bad, but speaking up is good.

**[0:21:20] IP:** Yeah, exactly. But my point is it takes a very astute human being at this point to look at pieces of physical paper. It seems like, maybe there's a better system here, but that's just me.

**[0:21:34] JR:** Yeah. I've got nothing to add to that.

**[0:21:35] IP:** Then let's move on to what the FAA says are new rules coming to close the public charter exemption. This could impact JSX, among others, such as, perhaps, Sky West Charters that are operating as part 135 public charter companies, but they're really operating scheduled passenger service.

**[0:21:58] JR:** If it looks like an airline, quacks like an airline – Wait, that's not how that goes, but yeah.

**[0:22:03] IP:** We'll go with it.

**[0:22:05] JR:** It's an airline by any other name.

**[0:22:07] IP:** Large airlines, like Southwest, American Airlines, Delta, and the US's largest pilots' union had lobbied the FAA to do something, anything, shut these guys down. The FAA said, "Yeah, we're going to take a look at this and close that public charter exemption." They however

say, that they're going to study whether a new category is needed to regulate operators, like JSX, saying specifically, the FAA will convene a safety risk management panel to assess the feasibility of a new operating authority for scheduled part 135 operations in 10 to 30-seat aircraft, and which would include JSX.

The concern beyond JSX being put out of business, but the concern writ large, is how would any new rules impact actual public charters for places that need this service, rather than airlines that have found a way to operate around this and provide better customer service, because they're not having to go through all of the same hoops that –

**[0:23:16] JR:** Yeah. Legitimate gripe, I think, on behalf of the airlines. JSX, essentially operates as a commercial scheduled airline, without any of the, or not any, but a lot of the regulatory headaches and passenger experience headaches that comes with being a regulatory scheduled airline. I believe there's no TSA screening. There are lower standards across the board for this, but they operate as any other airline would. There's a schedule and airlines, I think, at least like JetBlue, they have co-chair partnerships with this. You could connect from a JetBlue flight to a JSX flight and you wouldn't know that they're not regulated in the same way. This is probably good. I don't hope that it's the end of JSX, or this concept, but I do understand the reasoning about being upset about it. It's not competing on not an even playing field.

**[0:24:11] IP:** Yeah. If I'm one of the airlines, I completely understand where this is coming from. Let's also talk about what came out, I believe it was today, which was the preliminary report –

**[0:24:19] JR:** Weird coincidence timing.

**[0:24:21] IP:** Yeah. The NTSB's preliminary report into a hard landing suffered by a JSX E135. Jason, you've pulled some details out.

**[0:24:33] JR:** Yeah. You never really know in the moment what happened with an incident like this. Was it a gear collapse? Was it structural failure? Was it just age of the aircraft, or did something actually cause this operationally-wise? We now know from the NTSB report that there's some interesting things. Ordinary flight, otherwise, the crew described an uneventful take-off climb cruise and descent. But it gets a little weird on the landing. I quote here, "The

flight crew described a feeling that there was something wrong.” Feels like, Star Wars, I got a bad feeling about this. Just very vague. I resume the quote here. “And the captain who was the pilot flying called for a go-around. The aircraft landed hard shortly thereafter.” Huh, okay. I continue. “While the crew did not recall initiating the go-around, flight data showed an increase in throttle level angle consistent with commanding go-around thrust that began shortly after impact. Flight data indicated a vertical load factor during touchdown was 3.9G's.” Yikes.

“As the aircraft continued on the runway, the left main landing gear collapsed and punctured through the left-wing upper skin.” There is a lot to unpack in just those few sentences, such as, what did they think was wrong? Why did they call for a go-around, but land anyway? Why didn't

the crew remember initiating a go-around? 3.9Gs is a lot. It's not surprising that any one of the landing gear, if not all of them would have collapsed, because that is well, well in excess of a hard landing rating for any aircraft that is probably a major, major inspection almost certainly to be some damage. I think we look for an A320 something like 2.6Gs, until it becomes a critically damaging –

**[0:26:27] IP:** That's a hard landing. 2.6 is a hard landing.

**[0:26:32] JR:** 3.9 is, well, you end up with this, a very broken aircraft.

**[0:26:35] IP:** Yeah, broken plane.

**[0:26:37] JR:** The NTSB, in this case, a rare case where they actually did get the cockpit voice recorder on top of the flight data recorder, that I'm sure in the year, or two, or three, we'll get the final report, and some recommendations. But very interesting that they felt like something was wrong, but not sure what. And they called for a go-around, but they landed anyway. Things happen.

**[0:26:59] IP:** The aircraft has not flown since, by the way.

**[0:27:01] JR:** I don't think it will again.

**[0:27:02] IP:** I don't think it will ever fly again. Last week, we talked about the incident in Mumbai, where a departing Air India flight and an arriving Indigo flight came within –

**[0:27:19] JR:** Too close.

**[0:27:20] IP:** Came too close to each other, and experienced a loss of separation. A listener who is a 747 pilot for a European carrier named Matthew wrote in, and this was interesting. I'm hoping to get some more perspective on this. If you are a pilot listening, when we're done with this little bit, drop us a note, [podcast@fr24.com](mailto:podcast@fr24.com), because I want learn a little bit more about this, how you feel about these things. He says, as a European pilot, he doesn't really like the way that landing clearances are issued in the US.

**[0:27:56] JR:** Yeah, we know. No, we know. No European pilot likes that. What else is new?

**[0:28:00] IP:** But he brings it up. It's a strange and not the safest way of doing things. Meaning, that landing clearances are issued often when – to multiple aircraft, often before the aircraft ahead of them has cleared the runway.

**[0:28:14] JR:** Cleared the runway, even before they've landed. Forget about clearing the runway. You could have two or three or four aircraft cleared to land. I mean, at JFK, they're often cleared to land over New Jersey. They're not even the right state.

**[0:28:28] IP:** He was bringing up the fact that what he sees as safe is certainly not what he experiences in the US, and it always makes him rather uncomfortable when he's flying to the US. If he doesn't have landing clearance, then he's going to go around in a normal situation. But in the US, we already got landing clearance eight states away in certain prospects. It's interesting. I'd like to hear if there are any pilots listening what your thoughts are on that. What makes you comfortable to continue a landing in the differences between the US method, or approach and elsewhere.

**[0:29:07] JR:** Should we stick with Air India?

**[0:29:09] IP:** Yeah. Why not? Let's stay there.

**[0:29:11] JR:** Okay, that's good. Air India is now one step closer to becoming a whole new airline that people may actually, I don't know, enjoy flying on, and not run away in horror from. The first two of its A320s have been retrofitted already with a nice, new – fine, a nice little business class, some extra legroom economy and economy seats, and it just looks nice. It doesn't look like – if you've flown Air India in the last few years, you don't know what condition you were going to see that aircraft when you step onboard. Was it going to have those old monitors that didn't work? Or was it going to have the space in the back of the seat where the monitors used to be, but now it's just a piece of cardboard with a sign that says, those monitors aren't on anymore, or some other aircraft, or no. Air India is coming back and two A320s are proof that they're actually doing it, moving this airline in the right direction, which is going to be just really fascinating and fun to watch a country like India have a new major player on its hand that that people might actually like to fly.

**[0:30:14] IP:** Yeah.

**[0:30:14] JR:** And not just fly, because it's cheap.

**[0:30:16] IP:** If anything, we've really seen that Air India is very serious about this. The new management has seen the need to revamp the airline and has a plan to do so. As far as a hard product and the service and things like that, it really seems to be working. The one thing I will say though is that anytime they post some of these things, we see a lot of comments about how much people hate Air India. It's certainly a long –

**[0:30:45] JR:** They've got a long road to redeem the reputation. But it's a start. It's one of those, I think, few instances where an airline, or really, the privatization of any company has seemingly gone exactly to plan so far, and just straight up improvements are happening. That seems rare to me.

**[0:31:05] IP:** I'll take it.

**[0:31:06] JR:** Okay.

**[0:31:07] IP:** I'll take it. Not so great news, a few strikes to be on the lookout for, WestJet maintenance personnel could go on strike. WestJet is proactively canceling dozens of flights. In anticipation of that, waiting a labor board announcement, whether or not there will be arbitration, which would prevent strikes, or whether these – the maintenance personnel can in fact strike. We'll see where that one goes. Then Aer Lingus could be going on strike.

**[0:31:35] JR:** Yeah. Again, the pilots negotiations with Aer Lingus has not gone great. Some flights, I think from, operate from June 26<sup>th</sup> might be canceled, and we know they still won't be getting those A321neo XLRs, because those are in the process of being Iberiafied, but now it's being – Iberiafied, yeah. They're taking it a step further and there may be what they call the old industrial action don't quite know what flights will be impacted. But hey, it's summer. If you're not expecting strikes and disruptions in Europe, you're not really paying attention.

**[0:32:09] IP:** You're new to the game, and we'd forgive you. Speaking of disruption, this is a new one. Air New Zealand diverted a flight from New Zealand to Tokyo to pick up the airline CEO in Australia.

**[0:32:25] JR:** Yeah. Not just the CEO, but a whole bunch of dignitaries.

**[0:32:29] IP:** A whole bunch of people.

**[0:32:30] JR:** Yeah, this one comes to us from One Mile at a Time. I did not hear about this one prior, but the prime minister's aircraft of New Zealand, a very nice gray-looking 757, but as all 757s, they are getting elderly. We see that here with the head of state 757s here in the US, they also often get stranded in places and have to have rescues. But in this case, the prime minister was able to get scooped up by another aircraft, but there were still a bunch of other state dignitaries and the CEO of Air New Zealand, who were stranded, I think – Where are they stranded? They were hopping, going –

**[0:33:05] IP:** Brisbane.

**[0:33:06] JR:** They were in Brisbane. The prime minister got on a flight, continued on a flight to Japan via Hong Kong, apparently, on Air New Guinea, which is interesting. But Air New Zealand

figured, “You know, we can inconvenience our customers just a little bit with a two and a half hours of delay. But we can make a diversion, scoop up our CEO and a bunch of other dignitaries and get everyone on their way.” The CEO of Air New Zealand, Greg Foran sat in economy and even pitched in with the cabin crew and helped serve drinks. That's a happy ending.

**[0:33:38] IP:** There you go.

**[0:33:39] JR:** That's good.

**[0:33:41] IP:** Let's close the show with some updates. Global Airlines has announced that they are pushing back their launch to 2025.

**[0:33:52] JR:** Shocked. It must be hard for any of the seasoned aviation journalists to cover this in any serious matter, as if this is a thing that's really don't happen. Oh, yeah, the super serious A380 London to New York operators definitely just – they're delaying it till 2025. It's definitely a real thing. It's got to be hard to write that with a straight face.

**[0:34:14] IP:** I mean, I just haven't figured out why they're doing this.

**[0:34:19] JR:** There must be dollar signs in the math somewhere, for somebody.

**[0:34:23] IP:** Somewhere.

**[0:34:23] JR:** I mean, somewhere. I mean, we saw that with Baltia. I mean, we probably have to talk about them in a long time, but somebody was making money off that, right?

**[0:34:30] IP:** Well, yeah.

**[0:34:33] JR:** But that was for the courts to decide.

**[0:34:35] IP:** Yeah. I mean, that was a stock scheme. They seem like, they really want to get the aircraft into the air, but then what? The one thing that we haven't seen is any regulatory



paperwork. I mean, that's what I would be really interested to see. I would certainly take it much more seriously if we started to see some regulatory paperwork, but we haven't seen any.

**[0:34:56] JR:** Nope. We also haven't seen any new seats, or anything, seeing as the entire cabin on that thing is not legal to fly. That's super cool. Launching any real, legitimate airline is really, really complicated and expensive and time-consuming. Doing whatever this is, is I don't know. All of that –

**[0:35:15] IP:** Also, expensive and time-consuming.

**[0:35:17] JR:** Yeah. Apparently, more time-consuming than they thought.

**[0:35:20] IP:** Yes. Operations and maintenance timelines, like for any airline have led us to reprise when we will be operational. 2025 is the target that they're working with. The aircraft having flown out of the desert in the US over to Presswick for maintenance and a logo-ish thing. It's still in the China Southern Livery, but they've painted Global on it, which I guess is a step. It is sitting there.

In more news that should come as no shock to anyone who knows anything about airplanes and probably a bunch of people who know anything about how governments buy things, the first flight of the new VC25s, the Air Force One replacements has been delayed to 2026.

**[0:36:11] JR:** I am shocked.

**[0:36:14] IP:** Yeah.

**[0:36:15] JR:** Yeah, the first power on won't even happen until July 2025. Remember, these are aircraft that were already built and were sitting there and are now being completely, presumably, entirely gutted and retrofitted. It was supposed to be cheaper and faster to do it this way. Nope. Not at all. Big, big money loser for Boeing. But what else is new?

**[0:36:40] IP:** Boeing has lost – at one point, they lost nearly, or more than 425 million dollars in a single quarter.

**[0:36:49] JR:** In total, it's over 2 billion at this point. But the important thing is that Air Force One will still be a 747 for the foreseeable future. That's important.

**[0:36:59] IP:** Yeah.

**[0:37:00] JR:** In 30 years though, what would it be next?

**[0:37:03] IP:** Who knows? That's an episode way down. Let's see, we've got episode three – 4,000nd.

**[0:37:10] JR:** Ooh, that was quick.

**[0:37:12] IP:** 5,000? I don't know. But in any case, hey, when that comes out, we'll bring you that news, too. This, however, has been episode 273 of AvTalk. Thank you all so very much for listening. I am Ian Petchenik, here, as always with –

**[0:37:28] JR:** Jason Rabinowitz. Thanks for listening.

[END]