

EPISODE 344

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[0:00:08] IP: Hello and welcome to episode 344 of AvTalk. I am Ian Petchenik, here, as always with –

[0:00:15] JR: Jason Rabinowitz. Good seeing you this week, Ian. That was a nice surprise.

[0:00:19] IP: Yes. That was a nice thing that we made happen. Thanks for coming over, and we enjoyed a meal together, and you entertained my kids, which was very, very kind of you.

[0:00:31] JR: I think you got an extra half a breath in that day, when I was –

[0:00:35] IP: Maybe.

[0:00:36] JR: - distracting the 19 of them, I think, at one point they were there. Thanks for dinner. That was nice.

[0:00:43] IP: My pleasure.

[0:00:43] JR: Sometimes we actually see each other in person.

[0:00:46] IP: Sometimes. Sometimes. You're back in New York, and we are back.

[0:00:51] JR: What a week, man. What a week. It's only Wednesday. We record this on Wednesday, and this has been the longest month so far, these three days.

[0:01:00] IP: Let's start in Louisville. UPS Airlines flight 2976 crashed very shortly after takeoff yesterday on November 4th in Louisville. The MD-11 freighter aircraft registered N259UP was departing Louisville for Honolulu, fully loaded for the eight and a half hour flight. What we know now is the left engine, the number one engine separated from the aircraft, and based on visual

evidence captured at the scene, we believe the number two engine, so the tail mounted engine suffered a possible compressor stall.

The aircraft managed to gain height off the runway, clear the airport fence, then struck a UPS warehouse just outside the airport perimeter, and then impacted the ground in an industrial area just south of the airport. The takeoff roll began at 22.12 UTC, becoming airborne at about 22.13. The final position that we received was at 22.13.30, and that was south of the airport again. The post-crash fire extended a half mile, because the aircraft struck a waste oil recycling facility.

[0:02:40] JR: Oh, geez.

[0:02:43] IP: Between the amount of fuel onboard the aircraft, which was loaded for an eight-and-a-half-hour flight, and the waste oil recycling facility, that fire was massive, burned through most of the evening, and covered, as the NTSB says, a half mile.

[0:03:03] JR: Miraculously, at least, don't want to undersell it, but 11 people killed as of now, that, I believe, includes the flight crew of the UPS MD-11.

[0:03:13] IP: Of which there were three crew members onboard.

[0:03:16] JR: Three crew members. You hate to see even that number of people killed in a crash like this, but it is astounding that the number is not significantly higher, as there are a lot of airports around the world where a crash of that magnitude, very short of the field, just extending out from the runway a little bit, is a whole lot more populated than what was going on there at Louisville, which is UPS's world port. That is a major, major facility for them, and I believe one of the buildings it struck was actually a UPS facility, a sorting facility. Again, not at all minimizing the death here, but there are a lot of places where this would be a much, much bigger death toll.

[0:03:59] IP: Yeah, absolutely. What we know so far from the initial NTSB briefing today from the NTSB board member Todd Inman, we know that both the cockpit voice recorder and flight data recorder have been recovered, so both black boxes have been recovered. Both sustained heat exposure, he didn't say damage, or clarified that they were not damaged, but did sustain heat exposure. However, the NTSB believes that both of those flight data recorders, the cockpit

voice recorder and flight data recorder will be able to be read and downloaded. They are going to begin that process this week and we'll hopefully have more information in a future briefing.

We also know that the number one engine detached from the wing on the airport property. That's what the NTSB confirms. The visual evidence that we've seen, there are photographs of what appears to be most of the engine core –

[0:05:00] JR: Intact.

[0:05:01] IP: - on the airfield. Some very interesting things about that, one, the engine core appears to be in mostly intact. Two, the engine inlet nacelle is also about half intact in roughly the same area, and that was the left engine. Both pieces ended up on the right side of the runway.

[0:05:30] JR: Yeah. I mean, we've seen accidents in the past where just the inertia from these moving parts can fling engine debris halfway across an airport. I mean, I'm thinking back to the 767, American 767 at Chicago O'Hare, which didn't a piece of that engine end up a mile away on the roof of –

[0:05:51] IP: In a UPS warehouse.

[0:05:52] JR: In a UPS warehouse. There you go. There's some call back. When this stuff departs the aircraft, it does so with a lot of energy. How it ended up, where it did, the NTSB likely knows, because they said there is video surveillance from the airport, and I'm sure they will make that clear. If not in the initial report we'll get within a month, but in the final report, we will get eventually.

[0:06:16] IP: Yeah, eventually. This is obviously a very, very early days yet. They have not even announced all of the parties to the investigation yet. Still gathering preliminary information. Still learning more. Unfortunately, it sounds like there are still people unaccounted for, who may have been either working in businesses within that area, or customers of those businesses. Unfortunately, it sounds like the death toll will rise, though we don't know by how much. As we learn more throughout the week, I'm sure we'll come back to this next week and discuss what

we've learned in the interim either through NTSB updates, or updates from local authorities as well.

[0:07:06] JR: Yeah. I think I read the NTSB has 30 investigators, or something like that.

[0:07:11] IP: 28 investigators on the ground by the end of the day today. I'm not sure if that's a record number, but it is certainly a larger number than we have seen with previous investigations, though the crash in Washington being located near the NTSB may have been –

[0:07:33] JR: Ian, a bit of a different story there.

[0:07:34] IP: More staff there.

[0:07:36] JR: I assume it's such a high number, just because the crash site itself is less of a site, so much is a streak half a mile long, they said. They're going to have to comb, and a tremendous amount of area, not just the exact area where the aircraft impacted, but also everywhere around where that may have been to find any and every piece of that aircraft that they could cobble back together to tell the story of what happened to this aircraft. Remember, they're doing this all during government shutdown when they're not getting paid, and I'm sure everything they're doing that involves money, be it getting fed, eating, getting hotel room, rental car, whatever the NTSB needs to do to investigate a crash, I'm sure is much harder right now than it ever is and needs to be, at least here on US soil. Really, hats off to them for dealing with a tragic situation made even more difficult by what's going on at the federal level right now.

[0:08:38] IP: Yeah. Two points there. One, the FBI is assisting the investigation as they begin to collect the physical evidence. They are conducting a visual investigation along the area of impact and post-impact fire. The FBI is assisting with the physical collection of evidence, photography and the like. The NTSB is conducting aerial surveys at the moment, including drone surveys. And Inman did mention it that they have recalled some employees to work that had been not working during the government shutdown to facilitate the investigators' logistical needs during this investigation. Good to see that they are moving through that process and they will click it there as quickly as they did. We'll have more on this story in the coming weeks. I am sure. Definitely next week as we learn more than throughout the time as briefings continue. As

Jason mentioned, we are in the midst of week five of the US federal government shutdown, which means –

[0:09:48] JR: The longest ever.

[0:09:50] IP: The longest ever now. Yes. At 36 days that is now the longest ever, which means that multiple paychecks are about to be missed by federal staffers, including air traffic controllers. Beginning last week, the number of staffing triggers at air traffic control facilities around the country increased. Some of that was due to perhaps, trick or treating on Halloween, three-day weekends and things like that. However, it seems that the Department of Transportation has decided that enough is enough as far as what safety they are willing to see slide, or let decrease. The Department of Transportation has decided that it will begin as of Friday, should the government remain shut down, cancel 10% of flights, scheduled flights in 40 major markets across the country. This is breaking news, so we don't have any details on what those 40 major markets are. We don't have any details on how those cuts will be meted out. We don't have any details on which airlines will be impacted or if they will be impacted equally. What we do know is that's going to be thousands of flights per day.

[0:11:10] JR: Yeah. Not great right now, since we literally don't know anything. The DOT isn't updating its website, because of the shutdown. The latest news is from October 30th there, which I think was during the shutdown. I guess, they're putting some stuff through, but not others. It's really hard even to get some information on what's going on. 10% at 40 major markets, that's like every other airport becoming Newark, which is not what you want to see. At least here in the Northeast, we all know that the air traffic control system has been beyond its breaking point for years at this point. This essentially rolls that over to 40 other markets, which I can only assume is Miami, Dallas, Chicago, L.A., Seattle, San Diego, whatever. It's going to be painful and it's going to be on the airlines to figure out what 10% of flights do they want to cut and how do they want to handle those passengers, because loads are also pretty high right now.

This is not great, but it's necessary. Air traffic controllers are getting pushed beyond their breaking points. They've already been working six-day work weeks and mandatory overtime for years, doing that now on top of not getting paid. They can't do that forever. This seems like

slapping a band-aid on top of a band-aid that itself is on top of a band-aid that has been rotting away for years. Will it help? Maybe. Maybe not. They got to do something at this point.

[0:12:41] IP: Yeah. I think this is one of those things where it can't hurt, but I'm not sure it really helps.

[0:12:52] JR: Yeah. It relieves some of the pressure, but not enough that I'm sure really is going to matter. Just yesterday, I flew from Chicago O'Hare to LaGuardia and it was one of those days where it was windy here. So, pretty much everything was delayed. But everything seemed normal, dare I say, where flights were delayed. They were undelayed. EDTCs were issued. They were advised. Things seemed to be working. I'm just thinking behind the scenes, their traffic controllers don't have to do this. They can half-ass their job and say, "Oh, it's windy at LaGuardia today. Everything's delayed nine hours." But they didn't do that. They're professional. They're doing their job. They're doing it safely.

I'm not sure knocking 10% off the top is really going to make that much of a difference. It seems performative. I'm torn between it's better than nothing and it's not going to do anything at all. I don't know. We can't keep doing this forever. Like we've talked about before, the last government shut down pretty much ended because of air traffic controllers, but that doesn't seem like it's going to do the trick this time.

[0:14:02] IP: Yeah, but canceling thousands of flights each day. I mean, we're going into one of the busiest travel seasons of the year.

[0:14:12] JR: Yeah. Thanksgiving is right around the corner. I don't want to pick on DC, but if the FAA wants to trim a little more than 10% at DCA, that'll send a real message.

[0:14:24] IP: It certainly would.

[0:14:25] JR: 30, 40, 50.

[0:14:27] IP: Let's look at some financials, because that's always fun. In this case, Spirit AeroSystems lost 724 million dollars in the third quarter of this year.

[0:14:38] JR: That's Boeing's problem now. Who cares?

[0:14:40] IP: Almost. Yes. The loss wasn't an operating loss. It was a most of the loss, more than 500 million dollars of it was a carry forward loss. Basically, for tax purposes. However, they still lost 200 million dollars just from losing money.

[0:15:00] JR: They lost 200 million dollars from losing money. That is the analysis you can only get from us. If you want to go details, you go to The Air Current, or you go to another podcast. If you want to know that they lost 200 billion because they lost money, you're at the right place.

[0:15:19] IP: They've lost 2 billion dollars so far this year. but Boeing is set to acquire them by the end of the year and it will then be their problem.

[0:15:27] JR: All right, problem solved.

[0:15:28] IP: Spirit actually improved its performance in the third quarter, believe it or not. If we're measuring this on how many airplane parts get delivered to customers, they actually improved. Across their entire portfolio, they went from 332 ship sets in Q3 of last year to 392 of this year. They delivered, if we're just breaking out, Boeing, 97 37 MAX fuselages this year in Q3, versus 64 last year. Operationally, while they're still losing money, they're better at doing what they're supposed to be doing.

[0:16:11] JR: I guess, that's good news.

[0:16:13] IP: We'll take it.

[0:16:14] JR: When you hit rock bottom, there's only one way to go.

[0:16:17] IP: There you go. Hey, speaking of rock bottom, let's talk about Spirit, the airline.

[0:16:21] JR: Oh, different kind of Spirit, same kind of Spirit, I guess. Things are not going well. Our friend, Ned Russell, tells us that Spirit is removing itself from five additional cities, cutting

nine routes, gone entirely from the map as of January 2026. They are not insignificant cities, I would say. Milwaukee, gone. Phoenix, gone. Rochester, New York, gone. St. Louis, Missouri, gone. Bucaramanga, Colombia, BGA, haven't heard of that one before, gone. A mixed bag there, but cutting Phoenix entirely. I don't know how you remain an airline in the United States without operating to cities like Milwaukee and Phoenix. Those are big cities, last I checked.

[0:17:09] IP: I mean, yeah. Phoenix has been what? One of the fastest growing cities in the United States for a very long time. I mean, they're adding 20,000 people a month. Not a month, sorry, a year.

[0:17:26] JR: That would be fast if it was a month.

[0:17:27] IP: Yeah. It'd be really fast. Sorry, a year. With no signs of stopping. Milwaukee, still a major city with a huge suburb population, which is Spirit's bread and butter. Though, who knows what their bread and butter is anymore? Who knows if they even have bread, or butter.

[0:17:47] JR: I don't know, but Ned writes up that spirit CEO, Dave Davis. Is that really Spirit CEO's name now, Dave Davis? Today, I learned. Told staff in a memo viewed by himself that the cuts were to "Better align with our smaller fleet and focus on our strongest performing market." I guess, Phoenix and Rochester and Milwaukee just weren't cutting it for Spirit. All right. Good luck, guys.

[0:18:14] IP: Let's move to good news, news, just regular news.

[0:18:18] JR: News that isn't overtly bad.

[0:18:21] IP: News that isn't overtly bad. I like it. That's a new segment on the podcast. American Airlines has announced their first A321XLR route. Jason, where are they going?

[0:18:32] JR: Edinburgh. Very exciting. JFK.

[0:18:34] IP: That is exciting.

[0:18:36] JR: After, I believe, March 8th, so summer season starts early. If you're flying American to Edinburgh out of New York, the XLR is slated to begin service December, I think next month here, but on the premium JFK to LAX market. But we knew it was coming for international, but now we know it's going to Edinburgh, which is, I find particularly interesting, because it's one of those routes that American really hasn't been able to operate in the years past, because the last time it operated a narrowbody from JFK to Edinburgh was with its trashy 757s, right up until COVID.

[0:19:12] IP: I have flown that trashy 757.

[0:19:16] JR: Not knocking the 757, but American's 757 in its later days, they were not a good experience. If they were functioning at all on any given day, they were not good. The difference between what was in 2020 and what will be in 2026 is an entirely different airline. I think that's exactly what Americans trying to do, shed its tarnished past and become this new premium airline, because that's exactly what the XLR is. Hey, that's exciting.

[0:19:46] IP: Yeah, good for them. A cross podcast plug, while we're talking about American Airlines. Our friends over at the Air Show, Jon Ostrower, Brett Schneider, and Brian, whose last name I'm forgetting.

[0:19:58] JR: Summers.

[0:19:59] IP: Jason, help me out. Summers, thank you. Oh, my goodness. They just recently completed, or slightly finished. I assume there might be more episodes at some point in the future, a rundown of American Airlines problems between fleet and structure and leadership. It was a good series. If you're interested in a deep dive in why American Airlines has been mired in such, I don't want to say suck, but –

[0:20:31] JR: Ooh.

[0:20:33] IP: Kind of is.

[0:20:33] JR: Kind of. They are undoing the wrongs of the Vasu era. We only care about Flagstaff era. Was it Flagstaff? Was it Reno? I don't know.

[0:20:45] IP: El Paso. El Paso.

[0:20:47] JR: El Paso. There it is. El Paso. We only care about El Paso. There's also a good video from Wendover on YouTube, or Nebula, I guess, if you subscribe to that, that also goes into the same of what the hell happened to American in the last few years. It's a hot topic these days. They're trying to be better, but I also hear they're going through some layoffs right now, which is the opposite of trying to get better. But let's just stick with the good news of the XLRs is going back to Europe for American.

[0:21:17] IP: We head south now to Embraer's financial reporting for the third quarter of this year, wherein they say they finally have enough parts to build the planes they want to build this year. I guess, that's good news.

[0:21:31] JR: It's November 5th. I guess, that's good news. If they didn't, they probably wouldn't. I would hope they'd know by now.

[0:21:39] IP: They still have a long way to actually build those aircraft. They've been targeting between 222 and 240 civilian aircraft to complete in 2025, split between 145 and 155 biz jets and 75 to 85 Ejets. So far, they've done 102 and 46 respectively. They've got a ways to go.

[0:22:06] JR: We don't know what they're waiting for. Maybe the entire balance of the 222 to 240 aircraft they're building, they're all missing one screw common between all of them. They got a big shipment of screws coming in in December and they're just going to – they're going to put them on all those airplanes and send them on their way and hit their goal.

[0:22:24] IP: It's actually stickers. They're waiting for all the stickers to –

[0:22:27] JR: I mean, you laugh, but you can't certify a new aircraft without the no smoking stickers onboard. It could be.

[0:22:34] IP: That's true. That's true.

[0:22:36] JR: Not outside the realm of stupidly possible.

[0:22:39] IP: Anything in this industry. Other Embraer news, the regional next generation regional turboprop that Embraer announced to great fanfare just a few years ago, ain't going to happen. It's dead.

[0:22:53] JR: Energia program, or –

[0:22:54] IP: No. This was the –

[0:22:56] JR: It's hard to keep track of what Embraer is doing these days. They got a lot of pots boiling.

[0:23:02] IP: It was originally announced as a wing mounted turboprop and then it became a tail mounted turboprop. Then it became, “We're not really going to do this, but we're still thinking about doing it,” to this week becoming, “It's dead. Don't ever talk to us about it again.” Embraer was considering competing with ATR, basically. They said, “No, we're not going to do that.” What they are going to do is basically, something. Anything, everything. We don't know.

[0:23:29] JR: Please read the quote you have in the show notes here. I'd like you to read this quote verbatim.

[0:23:35] IP: It's not a quote by Embraer CEO. I'm wildly paraphrasing. But what he said was the new plane that they're working on could be big, could be small, could be electric, could be powered by kitten person unicorn friends. We don't know. But we're going to work on a new plane. We're going to work on it eventually. It was the most committed non-committal answer I think I've ever heard.

[0:24:01] JR: You know what? I respect that, because it's more than we've gotten out of Boeing in a very long time. At least Embraer says, “We're committed to doing something. We don't know what, but –”

[0:24:11] IP: We're committed to doing something.

[0:24:13] JR: We're going to do it. There's been a lot of back and forth and speculation of if Embraer is going to enter competition to break the duopoly and come out with an actual proper sized narrowbody to compete with Airbus and Boeing. Maybe it's that. Maybe it's not, but it apparently will not be a regional turbo prop.

[0:24:32] IP: It won't be a regional turbo prop. It could be a smaller electric regional aircraft. It could be a larger 737-A320 family competitor. It could be both. It could be neither. Who knows at this point. It could be anything. But they're working on it.

[0:24:51] JR: Okay.

[0:24:52] IP: Yeah. In Airbus news, Airbus has finally delivered its first A330neo to a Chinese airline. Hainan has taken delivery of the first of four A330-900neos. The news here is not that Airbus has finally delivered an A330neo to China. I don't think. I think it's that Hainan has actually taken delivery of an aircraft.

[0:25:15] JR: Wait. Hold on. I'm being told that it's already being transferred to another airline. No. Not yet. But if you have any historical context about Hainan, you're probably waiting for that to happen, for this to be transferred to Delta, or something like that. I had no idea Hainan even had A330neos on order, let alone 20 of them, and to actually take delivery of one. It wasn't the last time Hainan has taken delivery of anything that it's kept for more than a minute. Been a while.

[0:25:45] IP: It's been a while. It's been a while.

[0:25:46] JR: Did they have A350s in the fleet at some point? They did. They had a pair, and I think they went to Azul maybe?

[0:25:53] IP: Who even knows at this point?

[0:25:54] JR: Who knows? It's good for Hainan, good for China, good for Airbus. Unexpected good news.

[0:26:02] IP: We'll stick with Airbus notionally and talk about Swiss's plan for its A220 fleet. Starting immediately, the A220-100 is done for at least a year and a half. Because they're going to use those engines to keep the A220-300 fleet flying.

[0:26:23] JR: Oof. Nine, you say, A220-100s will be grounded to keep the 220-300s for a year and a half.

[0:26:31] IP: Yes. For at least a year and a half.

[0:26:33] JR: Every time we just waffle back and forth one episode to the next hearing, Pratt & Whitney says, things are getting better. Airbus says, things are getting better. Then the next episode, it's airline says, "What the hell? It's getting worse. We're going to ground these aircraft for a year and a half to support the other half of the fleet." Grounding nine aircraft for a year and a half, at least, that's a long time. That's dramatic. Ironically, maybe they'll have to call in airBaltic, and its fleet of A220s to backfill that? Who knows?

[0:27:03] IP: What they're doing is they're calling in Helvetic Airways and their fleet of Ejets. The A220-100s were operating a few routes, but mainly to London City, because they are required for the steep approach there. Now that the Ejets are certified for the steep approach, they can use the Helvetic Airways wet leases for the London City routes, take the engines off the A220-100s, put them on the A220-300s, and continue flying more passengers.

[0:27:32] JR: I need a flowchart.

[0:27:34] IP: I do, seriously.

[0:27:36] JR: I don't now.

[0:27:37] IP: We need something

[0:27:38] JR: We have some very minor breaking news right now. In reaction to the FAA's lopping of 10% of the flight schedule, Southwest is the first airline out to say something about it. I quote, "Southwest Airlines is evaluating how the planned FAA flight restrictions will affect our schedule, and will communicate directly with customers as soon as possible. Nothing is more important to Southwest than the safety of our customers and employees. at this point, even the airlines are hmm, we should probably get a couple meetings going to figure out who we're going to cancel.

[0:28:16] IP: Yeah. It sounds like the DOT made this decision and didn't really talk to the airlines beforehand.

[0:28:24] JR: Well, government shutdown, The phones don't work. Can't just call an airline without a phone.

[0:28:29] IP: Fair enough. Back to Airbus. Korean Air has converted seven of its A350-1000 orders into A350 freighters. Now they will have seven A350 freighters and 20 A350-1000 passenger aircraft. The airline is also scheduled to take eight 777-8Fs at some point.

[0:28:56] JR: One day, maybe in 2020, never. I don't even know what the timeline is for the certification of the 777-8F freighter. We've got to be looking at 2030 by now. Yeah, going to be a minute, can understand why Korean would convert those 350-1000s to freighters. I'm sure they don't really want to, but they must see a reason they need to. Maybe Boeing has told them that it will be delayed. However, they didn't tell Emirates about the last delay of certification to 2027 before they announced it publicly, so who knows? Maybe they're just reading the vibes in the room.

[0:29:36] IP: And covering all their bases. Speaking of government shut down news, the Mammoth 777-200LRMF. That is the Mammoth freighters 777-200 passenger to freighter conversion is delayed. Qatar Airways was scheduled to take delivery of the first aircraft later this year, so basically next month. That won't happen, because they have not secured the supplemental type certification for the aircraft, because of the government shutdown. that looks delayed until whenever, basically a month after the government reopens it sounds like. We'll see how long that takes.

This was an interesting one that I think is hilarious, because it sounds like the bill has no chance of passing, but whoever introduced it, because the similar bill has been introduced previously. Whoever keeps introducing these bills just maybe had a very bad experience with an airline at one point. In Brazil, they're trying to pass a, I hate an airline, I want to make it suck less for a passenger's bill.

It's a laundry list of everything everyone hates about flying and buying tickets and all that good fun stuff. The bill would prevent airlines from charging to select a seat. It would prevent airlines from charging bag fees. It would prevent airlines from automatically canceling the return link of a ticket if you miss the outbound flight. It would require airlines to provide up to two additional seats for passengers who require special assistance at no charge.

[0:31:24] JR: What was that last one prohibits bag fees?

[0:31:27] IP: Yes, prohibits bag fees. No fees for checked baggage. I think buried in there somewhere, if you ask to fly the plane, they have to let you.

[0:31:35] JR: Oh, well, I mean, that just goes without saying, but yeah, Brazil is not new to having very specific requirements and other oddities that only apply to Brazil. I think they already have many airlines that apply to Brazil have very, let's say, bespoke baggage rules and different weight limits. But preventing care is from charging seat selection fees. I'm just going to give a round of applause for that, because –

[0:32:04] IP: That one, I'll take.

[0:32:05] JR: It's becoming more and more popular that airlines are charging for seat assignment, even in premium cabins and business class.

[0:32:10] IP: More and more popular and more and more expensive.

[0:32:12] JR: Yeah, I hate it, but it's becoming very much a thing. I applaud that. Don't know about providing up to two additional seats for passengers applying special assistance. That's

going to be all sorts of complicated. Really interesting. I've ever heard the prohibit carriers from automatically canceling return tickets from passengers missed their outbound flight. That's interesting. I've ever heard anyone bring that up before. This is a thing that happens if you for whatever reason miss your outbound flight, or decide to get there a different way. That means your return flight is often canceled. Not doing that is interesting. I like that. I've never thought about that before, but Brazil is I guess the EU of the Americas, as far as consumer protections are concerned. It really seems like Brazil passes a lot of common-sense consumer protection laws very similar to the EU. Don't see all of this going through, but –

[0:33:14] IP: Basically, none of this has any chance of becoming law. It's still –

[0:33:17] JR: We'd love to seem talking about it.

[0:33:20] IP: Yeah, it's very early days and a similar bill has previously been vetoed. We'll see what comes of this. I just thought it was very interesting that they want to ban both charging for the seat selection, where I'm in total agreement with Jason and bag fees. As Jason mentioned, the interesting one there is the outbound cancellation. An interesting set of proposals that likely has no chance of becoming law.

[0:33:45] JR: Nope.

[0:33:46] IP: Perhaps, some of it will one day.

[0:33:48] JR: Sure.

[0:33:49] IP: In recapping some stories that we talked about in the past few weeks, six of the eight grounded Finnair A321s are now back in service. Two of those that are still out of service are now in maintenance facilities. One's in Norwich and one is in Prague, both maintenance locations for a 321 aircraft. It sounds like those are undergoing some more extensive maintenance, whether or not that's related specifically to the seat covers that were impacted by washing with water, rather than a chemical cleaning to maintain the fireproofing. Or if it's just regular old maintenance, we do not know, but we should see those back in service sometime soon back to full strength.

[0:34:37] JR: I think this is my runner, possibly runner up, or even first place for favorite story of the year.

[0:34:43] IP: The seat covers?

[0:34:44] JR: The seat covers at Finnair. It's just so, so, so wholesome, so simple, but impactful.

[0:34:50] IP: It's so wholesome, so simple, and so aviation that there's a very specific certification for seat cover fire retardant properties and using a water wash. Isn't certified for that, and so we need to ground eight planes.

[0:35:06] JR: Fantastic.

[0:35:07] IP: Our good friend Ned Russell also confirms this is, I guess, personal experience on his behalf and he did some reporting for us to say, yeah, they do give you a metal fork on Lufthansa. The guy that stabbed two people with a metal fork, he could have been sitting in economy.

[0:35:22] JR: Okay, glad we confirmed that. Thank you, Ned.

[0:35:25] IP: There you go. Last, but certainly not least, in our discussion about the Nouvelair and EasyJet A320 near collision in Nice, we were discussing the radar altimeter setting and whether or not it accounts for the extension of the landing gear. It indeed does. It accounts for both the extension of the landing gear and the flare angle, which is interesting to me. Based on the position of the radar altimeter, it's calibrated to adjust for the flare angle of the aircraft, so that pilots are not thinking that they are higher, because they're in the front of the aircraft, higher in a flare than the landing gear actually is. That's an interesting bit of information.

[0:36:09] JR: That is interesting.

[0:36:10] IP: I did not know.

[0:36:11] JR: Yeah. I guess, if you're flaring, you create, obviously, you're added a nose up attitude and the radar altimeter would be pointing down the runway and giving you a very false reading, so that the more you know, an educational podcast today.

[0:36:27] IP: We try our best. We educate, we entertain, we inform, we try our very best. If you like listening to this podcast and think, "Well, I like being entertained. I like being informed. This is good." Help us reach more people by leaving us a rating, review, putting up some sky writing would be perfectly acceptable. Also, also good. Wherever you get your podcast, whether it's Apple or Spotify or another platform, please tell folks there that you think this is a good podcast. If you've got questions, comments, concerns, email us directly, podcast@fr24.com. This has been episode 344 of AvTalk. I am Ian Petchenik, here, as always with –

[0:37:16] JR: Jason Rabinowitz. Thanks for listening.

[END]