

FAA: 787 Battery Redesign Approved

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Friday, the FAA approved a redesigned battery system for the 787 Dreamliner created by Boeing to protect the aircraft from potential battery fires, meaning the airliners may soon return to service. The 50 jets in service have been grounded since January, when two 787s suffered fires. Boeing must now issue a service bulletin that details the design changes that carriers will need to apply before their Dreamliners are approved for flight by the FAA. The FAA is expected to publish the information next week and foreign regulators are expected to follow the FAA with their own approvals. Meanwhile, the NTSB is still trying to determine why the aircraft's lithium ion batteries failed.

Beginning the week of April 22, the NTSB will hold meetings in which senior Boeing officials and representatives from two companies (France's Thales SA, and Japan's GS Yuasa Corp) that produce the battery and its larger systems for Boeing will testify. The company operated two flights (the last of which took place on April 5) to test the fix. The new battery system employs additional insulation and spacing for parts within the battery. Boeing had halted deliveries of the airliner while seeking resolution for the problem. The jet is currently operated by eight different airlines worldwide. Both JAL and All Nippon Airways in January operated Dreamliners that suffered battery fires during revenue operations.

SOURCE Avweb.com