



JETSTAR'S 787 DREAMLINERS FLYING WITH RISKY ENGINE PROBLEM

News / Airlines



BOEING 787 jets used by Jetstar are flying with a known engine problem that could shut down the engine mid-flight, according to The Australian newspaper.

Jetstar is understood to be working on repairs to a number of General Electric-made engines in its 787 Dreamliner fleet in order to resolve the problem, which could lead to a loss of oil pressure.

The engine problem could trigger a mid-flight engine shutdown, such as the one that forced one of Jetstar's Dreamliners to divert to the Pacific island on Guam during a flight from Japan to the Gold Coast last week.

The Australian understands Jetstar has made repairs to engines on 11 of its 787-8 jets since March, however the airline said that figure was "not correct" but declined to confirm a number.

Earlier this year General Electric issued a service bulletin to operators of Dreamliners using the GENx engine regarding an issue related to the engine's transfer gearbox.

The company recommended Dreamliner operators modify a “dampened radial gearshaft” to prevent “induced resonance failures that have caused approximately eight in-flight engine shutdowns and oil loss events across the world”.



Jetstar confirmed it had been issued General Electric’s service bulletin.

“Jetstar has been working closely with GE on the service bulletin,” a spokesman for the airline told The Australian.

“We are well progressed on our fleet and will have all aircraft engines completed months ahead of the recommended time frame from GE.

“We are continuing our investigations into the cause of the engine issue with GE on the aircraft that diverted to Guam.”

Service bulletins alert operators to known issues in aircraft components, but their instructions are optional. They are not as serious as airworthiness directives that require airlines to make modifications by a set deadline.

The engine issue also affects Dreamliners operated by airlines such as Air Canada, Air India, China Southern, United Airlines and Etihad Airways that fly from Australian airports.

General Electric says it continually monitors and analyses the performance of the GENx -engine fleet.

“Based on the engine fleet’s service history, we are not aware of operational issues that would hazard the continued safe flight of aircraft powered by these engines,” a spokeswoman told The Australian.

“As a relatively new engine in commercial airline service, the GENx by any statistical measure (dispatch reliability, engine removals, in-flight shutdown rates) is exhibiting outstanding reliability powering the 787.”

On Sunday, Jetstar flight JQ12, heading from Tokyo's Narita airport to Gold Coast airport made an emergency landing on Guam after encountering engine problems.

In a statement to news.com.au, Jetstar said the flight made the premature landing following a warning light turning on indicating an issue with the oil pressure.

The captain shut down one of the two engines "as a precaution" and diverted to the US territory located 2600km south of the Japanese mainland.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau is investigating the incident.

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