

8/15/2024

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

2024-158/3-18

2139177

To: Boeing Commercial Airplane Company

Info: FAA (AVP-1, AVP-200, AFS-200, AFS-900, AFS-260, AFS-100, AIR-720, AIR-780, AIR-360, SEA-AEG), A4A, ALPA, AMFA, ASAP, ATSG, CAPA, IAM, IBT, ICAO, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NTSB, PAMA, RAA, SWAPA, TWU

From: Becky L. Hooey, Director  
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

Re: B737-800 Nose Wheel Snubber Pad Wear

We recently received ASRS reports describing a safety concern that may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the enclosed deidentified report.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dr. Becky Hooey at (408) 541-2854 or email at [becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov](mailto:becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov).



Aviation Safety Reporting System  
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



## ACN 2139177

### DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence	202405
Local Time Of Day	1801 to 2400

### PLACE

Locale	ZZZ.Airport
State	US
Altitude - AGL	0

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

Make Model Name	B737-800
Operating Under FAR Part	121

### COMPONENT 1

Aircraft Component	Nose Gear Tire
--------------------	----------------

### PERSON 1

Function - Flight Crew	Captain
ASRS Report Number	2139177

### EVENTS

Anomaly	Aircraft Equipment Problem - Less Severe
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - MEL / CDL
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published Material / Policy
Detector - Person	Flight Crew
Result - General	Maintenance Action
Result - General	Release Refused / Aircraft Not Accepted

### NARRATIVE 1

On Day 0 while performing preflight duties for Aircraft X ZZZ – ZZZ1, I performed the walkaround and found the nose wheel snubber pads worn beyond limits. I wrote a report and when Maintenance arrived and looked at it he said he was going to placard it. I informed him there was no MEL for it as I had the same write-up on previous aircraft 3 times in the last year. He showed me MEL 32-XX and said that was the MEL. I told him it must be new, because the previous times I had written it up they had taken the aircraft out of service or done 1 time operations engineering authorizations to fly it back to a hub for repair. He said he wasn't sure if it was new, but that was the MEL. I assumed that a new MEL must have been created – yesterday I learned there is a revision number on each page showing when that page was last changed. He applied the MEL, signed off the aircraft, and we departed. We noted upon reaching cruise that leaving the gear down on climb-out had burned an extra 200 – 300 lb. from planned and that should probably be added to the MEL.

Yesterday I was preparing to depart ZZZ2 – ZZZZ on a MAX and found the snubber pads worn beyond limits. I wrote it up, called Maintenance, and told them we would need a new plane for ZZZZ as the weight limit imposed by the MEL would be problematic for that weight restricted route. After getting a new MAX we discovered the pads on it were also worn beyond limits. When Maintenance arrived at that plane – we left the first plane before they arrived – the Mechanic said that he wasn't sure MEL 32-XY, the MAX equivalent of MEL 32-XX, applied to the nose wheel snubber pads. Having spoken to Dispatch about the issue that evening I had learned about the MEL revision numbers on each page and it dawned on me that the Mechanic in ZZZ may have improperly used the MEL on the aircraft on Day 0. After making some calls the Mechanic informed me

that the MEL did in fact not apply to the nose wheel or snubber pads and that there was no MEL relief for them. While comparing the 2 MELs during this process I found it quite interesting, unexplainable, and a little disconcerting that the MEL 32-XX limits climb limited and runway limited takeoff weights while the MAX only limits climb limited takeoff weights. My concern with that is that it would seem the point of the MEL is to rotate and get airborne at minimum speed, but the only solution we had come up with assuming the use of the MEL was to actually use a flaps 1 takeoff with a higher Vr than our original performance data. Additionally from experience on Day 0, both MELs should penalize fuel by 200 – 300 lb.

As a Captain who only does 1 walkaround per trip I am finding these pads worn well beyond limits far too frequently. Combined with the fact that we received 2 aircraft back-to-back in the same condition I think it's safe to say pilots are not inspecting the pads each flight and Maintenance is also failing to check them regularly. I placed too much trust in the Mechanic, who seemed experienced, on Day 0. I recommend a maintenance discrepancy item, like [MEL] 32-XZ for tires, that automatically pops after a certain number of cycles to raise awareness for pilots and Maintenance that the snubber pads likely need to be changed soon.

## **SYNOPSIS**

B737-800 Captain reported discovering multiple aircraft had worn nose wheel snubber pads. A flight was completed on an affected aircraft, where the wrong MEL was applied.