ALERT BULLETIN

2026:31/3-5
10/15/2026
2401721

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, NTSB, PAMA, RAA, SWAPA, TWU

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

SUBJ: B737-800 Stabilizer Trim Failure

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 following:

ASRS received a report from a B737-800 First Officer describing the failure of the stabilizer trim system. Reporter stated that during the climb the electric trim began making abnormal noises and then stopped working. Reporter further stated the flight crew was unable to operate the manual stabilizer trim wheel. After landing maintenance found that the stabilizer trim chain had broken.

Previous ASRS alert message 2024-157/3-1 also involves a B737-800 stabilizer trim failure event, which is enclosed.

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.

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

ACN 2401721	
DATE / TIME	
Date of Occurrence	202608
Local Time Of Day	0001 to 0600
PLACE	
Locale	ZZZ.ARTCC
State	US
AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X	
ATC / Advisory - TRACON	ZZZ
Make Model Name	B737-800
Operating Under FAR Part	121
COMPONENT 1	
Aircraft Component	Horizontal Stabilizer Trim
PERSON 1	
Function - Flight Crew	First Officer
Function - Flight Crew	Pilot Flying
ASRS Report Number	2401721
EVENTS	
Anomaly	Aircraft Equipment Problem - Critical
Anomaly	Inflight Event / Encounter - Loss Of Aircraft Control
Detector - Person	Flight Crew
Result - General	Flight Cancelled / Delayed
Result - General	Maintenance Action
Result - Flight Crew	Landed in Emergency Condition
Result - Flight Crew	Returned To Departure Airport
NARRATIVE 1	

Departed Runway XX at ZZZ for the ZZZZZ Departure. I was the pilot flying and was manually flying the jet before subsequently engaging the autopilot above 10,000 feet and after reaching climb speed of 280 – 315. Between ZZZZZ1 and ZZZZZ2 waypoints on the departure I had just passed 10,000 feet and cycled the chime as required per SOP. I was still manually flying the aircraft and was trimming the jet to maintain a climb speed. The electric trim started sounding louder than usual and making clacking noises that I typically do not hear from the electric trim. Eventually, the sound stopped just as the electric trim itself stopped working.

I advised the captain of the situation. He confirmed the electric trim was out but it turns out the manual trim wheel had become inoperative as well. We were unable to manually trim using the manual trim wheel and had to rely on airspeed and thrust to maintain level flight.

We ran the non-normal checklists after having advised ATC of a developing situation and asked for return to and level-off at 10,000 feet since we had passed it on the climb-out. After leveling off at 10,000, we were given vectors to fly eastbound until we were ready to advise ATC of our intentions. We ran the appropriate checklists and subsequently switched pilot flying and monitoring duties.

We advised ATC of our intentions to return to the airfield. We eventually requested priority handling and were given vectors for an ILS approach into Runway XX. We landed safely and taxied to the gate. According to the captain, the flight controls felt heavier than usual during approach.

When we got to the gate, the maintenance team asked us what happened before looking into the matter themselves. Just before all passengers had disembarked, the maintenance team showed us a picture of a chain that connects the trim to the control wheel/column and the chain had snapped off – rendering the electric trim inoperative.

We were fortunate the electric trim failure happened right after reaching 10,000 feet and passing 250 knots and accelerating to normal climb speed. Had it happened later in the flight, at altitude and during cruise, we would have had a more challenging situation. Having a good flight deck management model and airmanship helped. Requesting priority handling and running non-normal checklists in a non-rushed, methodical matter was also crucial.

SYNOPSIS

B737-800 First Officer reported the electric and manual trim stopped working during departure climb. Flight returned to departure airport and maintenance found the chain that connects the trim to the control wheel/column had snapped off, rendering the electric trim inoperative.

Previous Alert

8/15/2024 **FOR YOUR INFORMATION** 2024-157/3-17

2139266

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 Electric Trim System Failure

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.

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

ACN 2139266

DATE / TIME	
Date of Occurrence	202407
Local Time Of Day	0601 to 1200
PLACE	
Locale	ZZZZ.ARTCC
State	FO
Altitude - MSL	12000
ENVIRONMENT	
Flight Conditions	VMC
AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X	
ATC / Advisory - Center	ZZZZ
Make Model Name	B737-800
Operating Under FAR Part	121
COMPONENT 1	
Aircraft Component	Elevator Trim System
PERSON 1	
Function - Flight Crew	Captain
Function - Flight Crew	Pilot Flying
ASRS Report Number	2139266
EVENTS	
Anomaly	Aircraft Equipment Problem - Critical
Detector - Person	Flight Crew
Result - General	Maintenance Action
Result - Flight Crew	Landed in Emergency Condition
Result - Flight Crew	Overcame Equipment Problem
Result - Flight Crew	Returned To Departure Airport

NARRATIVE 1

On climb-out, the FO was hand-flying and the electric trim system completely failed. We ran the appropriate checklist, [advised ATC], and asked to return to ZZZZ as we were only a few minutes away. Using manual trim, we began the descent, notified passengers and flight attendants of the situation. and set up for the ILS XX. Once all items were completed I took the aircraft for landing, manual trim, flaps 15, uneventful landing and taxi into the gate. Upon conversing with Maintenance Control, it appears this is a repeat issue and they cancelled our flight to ZZZZ1 in wanting to replace the trim motor.

SYNOPSIS

B737-800 Captain reported the electric trim system failed on climb-out and the flight crew performed an air turnback. According to Maintenance Control, this was a repeat issue.