INDONESIA TO INSPECT AIRBUS A320 PLANES FOLLOWING AIRASIA CRASH INVESTIGATION

News / Airlines

Indonesia will inspect all 75 Airbus A320 jets flown by domestic airlines, following a report this week that cited component failure as one factor in the crash of an AirAsia jet last year that killed 162 people.

Indonesia's Directorate General for Civil Aviation said Thursday that it would check for any rudder system issues on A320s flown by domestic airlines, including the budget carriers AirAsia Indonesia, AirAsia X, Citilink and Batik Air.

Earlier this week, investigators of the crash of Flight 8501, an A320 that plunged into the Java Sea on Dec. 28 while en route to Singapore from the Indonesian city of Surabaya, pointed to a faulty solder joint that interrupted an electrical connection, resulting in repeated alerts concerning the jet's rudder system. Investigators said evidence indicated that pilots responded to one of the alerts by resetting circuit breakers that turned off autopilot and other protective flight systems. Soon after, the plane stalled and crashed.

Air Transportation Director General Suprasetyo said the inspections of the A320 fleets began

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today.

He said Indonesian regulators would also address other issues highlighted in the crash report, including evaluating procedures related to repetitive errors. The AirAsia jet had experienced rudder system alerts 23 times in the year before the crash, with increasing frequency, according to maintenance records, but the issue wasn't identified as a repetitive error.

Mr. Suprasetyo also said pilots would be required to undergo more frequent flight-skills training, taking part in training sessions for some skills every six months instead of 12. He said training sessions would focus also on flying manually, and on using standard "callouts," or cockpit instructions.

The crash report had flagged a nonstandard callout from the captain of Flight 8501 as confusing during the flight's final minutes, leading the two pilots to perform contradictory actions.

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