

Safety Information Bulletin

ATM/ANS – Operations

SIB No.: 2022-12

Issued: 20 December 2022

Subject: Loss of Air Traffic Control Tracking on Boeing 787 Aeroplanes in European Airspace

Ref. Publications:

- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [1207/2011](#) of 22 November 2011 laying down requirements for the performance and the interoperability of surveillance for the single European sky.
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2017/373](#) of 01 March 2017 laying down common requirements for providers of air traffic management/air navigation services and other air traffic management network functions and their oversight, repealing Regulation (EC) No 482/2008, Implementing Regulations (EU) No 1034/2011, (EU) No 1035/2011 and (EU) 2016/1377 and amending Regulation (EU) No 677/2011.
- Regulation (EU) No [376/2014](#) of 03 April 2014 on the reporting, analysis and follow-up of occurrences in civil aviation, amending Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Directive 2003/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Commission Regulations (EC) No 1321/2007 and (EC) No 1330/2007.
- EASA SIB [2021-03R1](#) 'Loss of Traffic Control Tracking on Boeing 787 Aeroplanes in European Airspace' dated 22 June 2021.

Applicability:

Air navigation service providers (ANSP) providing Air Traffic Service (ATS) within the Single European Sky (SES) airspace and operators of Boeing 787 aeroplanes.

Description:

An increasing number of intermittent 'loss of tracking' occurrences are being reported in SES airspace. More specifically, the graphic representation of certain radar tracks on the air traffic controller (ATCO) working position are degrading to indicate primary radar return only, which can under certain conditions lead to a complete loss of a track.

Such loss of tracking occurrences involve Boeing 787 aeroplanes and are attributed to transponder malfunctions. During these events, the flight crew is unaware of any transponder malfunctioning and the subsequent loss of tracking.

This malfunction may also result in the Short-Term Conflict Alert (STCA) not functioning correctly and/or a degradation in the quality of the surveillance service. Selecting the alternate transponder normally restores the tracking.

This is information only. Recommendations are not mandatory.



Loss of tracking causes additional workload to ATS units and results in an unnecessary distraction for ATCOs.

At this time, the safety concern described in this SIB is not considered to be an unsafe condition that would warrant Airworthiness Directive (AD) action under Regulation (EU) [748/2012](#), Part 21.A.3B, or a Safety Directive (SD) under Regulation (EU) [965/2012](#), Annex II, ARO.GEN.135(c), or Commission Regulation (EU) [2017/373](#), ATM/ANS.AR.A.025.

EASA is continuing to monitor the situation and further actions may be considered to contain the impact of malfunctioning transponders.

Recommendation(s):

EASA recommends the following actions:

- ANSPs should increase the level of awareness of their operational personnel and ensure they are familiar with the contingency plans and procedures.
- When a loss of tracking occurs, the ATS unit should alert the flight crew and request them to select the alternate transponder.
- ANSPs should promptly report such occurrences in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) [376/2014](#).
- ANSPs should forward any other relevant information on this topic to EASA (atm@easa.europa.eu), to support the ongoing work related to the EASA continued monitoring and resolution.
- Operators of Boeing 787 aeroplanes should inform their flight crews about the possibility of receiving requests from the ATS unit to select the alternate transponder.

Contact(s):

For further information contact the EASA Safety Information Section, Certification Directorate.

E-mail: ADs@easa.europa.eu.

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