Beat: Technology

Mechanical problem forces Boeing 787 to return to Houston

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USPA News - A Boeing 787 Dreamliner was forced to return to an airport in Houston on Sunday after a problem involving its brake system, marking the third time in less than a week that Boeing`s newest airplane ran into problems during a flight, officials said. The latest incident happened on Sunday morning after United Airlines flight 94 took off from George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston.

Mary Ryan, a spokeswoman for United Airlines, said the aircraft was forced to return to Houston due to a "brake system indication," but gave no other details. Bound for Denver International Airport in Colorado, the Dreamliner had departed the airport in Houston at 9:30 a.m. local time and had just crossed into Oklahoma airspace when the aircraft was forced to turn back. It landed without incident at George Bush Intercontinental Airport at 11:58 a.m. local time. Ryan said the aircraft returned to service on Monday, but gave no details about the nature of the problem that marked the third time in less than a week that one of Boeing`s newest airplane suffered a problem in-flight. "We re-accommodated customers to their final destinations on alternate aircraft," she said. But Boeing spokesman Doug Alder, commenting on the recent incidents, defended the aircraft. "In each of the recent cases, Boeing monitored the airplane in real-time through our Airplane Health Management system, positioned a Field Service Representative at the airplane and worked with the customer to return the airplanes to service as quickly as possible," he said. Alder added: "The 787 is a great airplane and has been performing on par with the 777`s entry into service. We know it will continue to receive heightened attention when reliability events occur in service." He gave no additional details about the recent mechanical problems, which were all relatively minor but serious enough to cause planes to be diverted. On Tuesday last week, a United Airlines Boeing 787 flying from Denver to Tokyo was forced to land in Seattle due to a problem with the aircraft`s oil filter. Just two days later, a United 787 flying from London to Houston was diverted to Newark, New Jersey because of a low engine oil indicator. And earlier this month, on June 11, a Japan Airlines 787 flying to Singapore was forced to return to Tokyo`s Haneda Airport after a problem with its deicing system. A day later, an All Nippon Airways 787 flight from the Japanese city of Ube was canceled when the aircraft`s right-side engine failed to start. The aircraft manufacturer has said this month`s problems were unrelated to previous problems with the aircraft`s battery systems that caused the entire fleet of Dreamliners to be grounded. The aircraft returned to service at the end of April after the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved Boeing`s revised battery design.

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