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# **FAA Approves Southwest Airlines Replacement Plan Without Grounding Aircraft**

## **Parts Meet Manufacturer Requirements; Planes Safe to Fly; No Impact for Flying Public; Replacements Already Complete on 43 Aircraft**

DALLAS, Sept. 1 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Southwest Airlines today reached a resolution with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which approved the carrier's plan to replace certain parts on flap exhaust gate assemblies on 82 of its Boeing 737-300 and -500 series aircraft. Southwest has already begun an aggressive, yet safe and deliberate schedule to replace these parts on the affected aircraft. Southwest has accomplished replacements on 43 aircraft to date. The remaining replacements will be made by Dec. 24, 2009, with an inspection of the assembly every seven days on affected aircraft until the replacements are made. Southwest Customers will not experience any impact to their flight plans as a result of the replacement schedule.

"We want to assure our Customers that this situation is not about having unsafe parts on our airplanes. Our approved vendor subcontracted a machining function without appropriate written approval from FAA. As a result, the parts are considered unapproved and must be removed regardless of their quality," said Mike Van de Ven, Southwest's Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. "The parts have been inspected, and the FAA agrees that they meet the requirements of the aircraft manufacturer, Boeing. We concur that this plan is the best and most reasonable manner in which to fulfill the FAA's mandate."

Southwest Airlines, the nation's leading low-fare carrier, continues to stand above other airlines - offering a safe, reliable product with exemplary Customer Service. Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), the nation's largest carrier in terms of domestic passengers enplaned, currently serves 67 cities in 34 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,200 flights a day and has nearly 35,000 Employees systemwide.

SOURCE Southwest Airlines