

New whistleblower exposes Boeing's use of scrapped parts

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4 July 2024

Merle Meyers, the latest in a string of Boeing whistleblowers that have emerged this year, has raised new allegations that the aerospace corporation knowingly used spare and defective parts in its 787 Dreamliner facility in Everett, Washington, to meet production quotas.

Meyers worked as a quality-control manager for 30 years, according to CNN which first broke the story. During the interview, Meyers told the outlet that since the early 2000s, Boeing took scrapped parts and put them into planes.

Boeing managers used an “elaborate off-the-books practice” that involved taking parts from the company’s internal scrap yards and putting them back on the production line, despite being marked with red paint as defective.

Throughout the process, the defective parts were hidden from the Federal Aviation Administration in, as CNN described, “organized efforts designed to thwart quality control processes in an effort to keep up with demanding production schedules.”

In total, Meyers estimated that 50,000 parts “escaped” quality control and were put into aircraft now in use. Meyers noted, “It puts people’s lives at risk ... A lot of these are flight-critical parts.”

When asked, “Why Boeing would do this ... to make money?” Meyers responded, “Yeah.”

One of Meyers’ earliest internal complaints to Boeing management dates back to 2002, in which he noted how few investigations were being done regarding the use of the defective parts. “Their investigations are about analyzing excuses by process violators, and not taking action against those committing compliance violations,” he wrote.

Another email, 20 years later in 2022, warned that Boeing’s internal investigators routinely ignored, “eye

witness observations and the hard work done to ensure the safety of future passengers and crew.”

Meyers’ allegations are among the most damning of the deluge that have been brought forth this year in the wake of a door plug blowing off of a 737 Max after takeoff in January. It makes clear that, for decades, every level of Boeing management has not merely been complicit but actively involved in making defective planes in pursuit of ever greater profit.

“I think they need to punish, to fire people that blatantly violate the process and endanger the flying public. It’s a huge problem,” Meyers said.

One can go further. Since 2002, there have been more than 60 fatal accidents of Boeing aircraft, killing hundreds of passengers, crew and bystanders on the ground. It is well documented that at least two of these crashes, the two MAX 8 crashes in 2018 and 2019, were the direct result of Boeing’s drive for profits at the expense of human lives.

In another complaint filed last week, whistleblower Richard Cuevas noted that, during his work as a contractor for Boeing and Spirit AeroSystems, workers were being forced to drill holes for fasteners larger than they should have been, “to speed up a slow process.”

Cuevas warns that larger holes means the plane’s forward pressure bulkhead isn’t as secure as it should be, and risks both depressurization and power failure.

He also alleges that he was fired from his job after bringing forward these warnings.

Meyers and Cuevas’ revelations, alongside those of all the other whistleblowers that have come forward, strongly suggest many of the other accidents were also engendered by the money interests of executives.

Whatever “punishment” Boeing suffers from either its own internal processes or the federal government, however, will be minimal at best. The Associated Press

revealed Sunday that the Department of Justice is seeking a plea deal with Boeing for “criminal fraud” for the two MAX 8 crashes.

In other words, Boeing won’t be prosecuted for murdering 346 men, women and children who died in the two crashes. The federal government’s concern is merely that they were lied to by Boeing, and are content with letting the corporation off with a fine and no charges brought against any executives.

These include former CEO Dennis Muilenburg, who made more than \$80 million in salary and benefits during his tenure, which oversaw the development and production of the deadly MAX 8 aircraft. It also includes David Calhoun, Muilenburg’s successor and also a Boeing executive during the MAX 8 crashes, who has made an estimated \$76.5 million since he became CEO in 2021.

The subservience of the American government to Boeing was also demonstrated in a recent Senate hearing in June, in which Richard Blumenthal (Democrat-Connecticut) gave a stage-managed “reckoning” with Calhoun.

In reality, Blumenthal held the hearing in an attempt to restore Boeing’s credibility, “because we want Boeing to succeed.” He also added that the company had to be protected “for the sake of our military.”

Therein lies the real reason Boeing has been allowed to get off scot free with its murder of commercial passengers, because it is complicit in so many more crimes committed by American imperialism.

In 2023, Boeing was the fourth largest defense contractor in the US, receiving more than \$14.8 billion to produce weapons for wars abroad. Boeing’s military pedigree includes making and maintaining F-15 fighters, V-22 attack helicopters, and B-52 strategic bombers.

Such aircraft are critical components of the US war drive internationally, including the ongoing genocide by Israel’s Zionist regime against Gaza, the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine, and the escalating war plans against Iran and China.

Any real change to the aerospace industry as a whole will not come from appeals to any “better natures” of corporate executives and the capitalist ruling elite but from the working class, the only social force opposed to sacrificing human lives for profits.

The ongoing contract talks between Boeing and the

32,000 machinists of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) can play a significant part in this process. One of the key demands of the machinists is that the numerous safety and quality inspector positions that have been cut are restored. Boeing has so far refused such demands.

The contract for the machinists expires on September 12, and a strike authorization vote is scheduled for July 17.

Boeing executives are bound to the interests of US imperialism and the world capitalism system. As in all aspects of modern life, the drive for profits at the expense of human lives is innately tied to this outmoded social system and can only be resolved when the aerospace industry is placed under workers control as part of the revolutionary struggle for socialism.



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