

UK: 2013 Dreamliner fire caused by crossed wires

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British aviation investigators reported Wednesday that a 2013 fire on a Boeing 787 Dreamliner started in a battery for the plane's emergency locator transmitter—a finding that triggered recommendations to improve safety on similar battery-powered equipment on planes.

The Air Accidents Investigations Branch said in a report that crossed and trapped wires under the battery compartment created a short circuit on the Ethiopian Airlines-operated plane parked at London's Heathrow Airport on July 12, 2013. The fire then spread to the fuselage, which is made of composite material.

Among the recommendations, the branch said the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, together with similar bodies in Europe and Canada, should conduct a review of equipment powered by lithium metal batteries to ensure they have "an acceptable level of circuit protection."

Boeing said in a statement it stood by the 787's overall integrity.

"We are committed to a process of continual improvement of our airplanes and we will carefully review the AAIB's recommendations," Boeing said. "It is important that any potential changes to the airplane's design be reviewed with great care, and with due consideration for any potential unintended consequences of any change."

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