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SAS returns Dash8/Q400 to traffic

Following an extensive inspection program and parts replacement, SAS is now returning Dash8/Q400 aircraft to traffic. Flights will begin on Thursday and more aircraft will successively return to traffic after testing and parts replacement have been completed.

SAS chose to ground the entire Q400 fleet following two accidents, in Aalborg on September 9 and Vilnius on September 12, to replace parts identified as the cause of the accidents. This involved an actuator in the main landing gear that was affected by corrosion.

At an early stage, SAS decided to replace all actuators, whether they showed signs of corrosion or not. Accordingly, SAS took actions that went a step further than those required by the civil aviation authorities and the aircraft manufacturer.

SAS has conducted extensive inspections of the main landing gear and the nose gear, and undertook much more comprehensive inspections than those required by the civil aviation authorities and the aircraft manufacturer. Thereafter, the aircraft that are now being returned to traffic have undergone extensive test flights and have received the necessary airworthiness certificates from the authorities.

Eight of Scandinavian Airline's Q400s are now ready to return to traffic – five in Denmark and three in Sweden. Test flights of the remaining aircraft in the fleet are continuing and they will be returned to traffic successively. In Denmark, the first flight will be to Hamburg on Thursday and in Sweden the first flight will be to Örnköldsvik. In Denmark, there will be a total of seven flights with the Q400 on Thursday and in Sweden four flights. SAS expects that it will be able to offer its full traffic program not later than October 15. Widerøe plans to put three of its four Q400 aircraft in traffic on Thursday and the fourth on Sunday.

SAS will initiate discussions with Bombardier regarding compensation for the costs and lost income incurred due to the aircraft being grounded for about three weeks.

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