



# COULDBOEING 737 MAX CRASHES BE AVOIDED? FACTORS THAT UNDERMINED PROJECT SAFETY

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## Abstract

*One year after the two plane crashes that killed 346 people, the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (HCTI) issued a preliminary report on the investigation findings. Multiple factors were pointed as causes for the accidents, highlighting the pivotal failure software Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System (MCAS), primarily designed to address stability issues due to specific flight conditions, kept by Boeing unknown to the pilots. This article is intended to provide scholars, decision-makers, and practitioners with a perspective on the current situation and implications for the company, competitors, and customers, through a descriptive case study, and content analysis. Key findings in the report pointed out five leading factors to Boeing's 737 MAX project failure, after the preliminary investigation: (i) production pressures due to financial and market competition against Airbus; (ii) faulty assumptions; (iii) culture of concealment; (iv) conflicted representation and (vi) Boeing's influence over the FAA's oversight. We analyzed and discussed the critical factors, their impact on the results, and best practices to prevent project failure on the subject under review.*

**Keywords:** Civil aviation, Boeing, Aircraft manufacturer, 737 MAX

## 1. Introduction

The present article investigated the factors that contributed to Boeing's 737 MAX failure project, as the unit of analysis, through a descriptive, single case study (Yin, 1988).

Two plane crashes shocked the world due to their particularities: on 29 October 2018, Indonesian Lion Air flight 610 (precisely 13 minutes after takeoff) departing from Soekarno–Hatta International Airport (CGK) in Jakarta, with destination to Depati Amir Airport (PGK) in Pangkal Pinang, crashed into the



















