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## FAA Targets American After Three Rough Landings

December was not a great month for American Airlines. Between December 13 and 24, the carrier endured three rough landings—two in which wingtips struck the ground, and one where an aircraft skidded off the runway in Jamaica.

Three incidents in a matter of weeks is a surefire way to get the attention of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The FAA's interest lies mostly in whether or not these incidents are merely aberrations or are symptomatic of flying and maintenance procedures that need to be improved.

NPR reports that American is investigating all three incidents. The carrier has so far discovered no substantial connection between the three, and points out that the planes involved in the wingtip incidents—MD-80s—sport wings that are relatively low to the ground. The Jamaica landing involved very poor weather conditions.

On the surface, American's landing issues don't suggest flying suddenly isn't safe, or that American is guilty of egregious safety lapses behind the scenes. Rather, this seems like an unusually compressed series of incidents that, unfortunately, do occur from time to time.

That said, it is possible that the incidents will reveal a correctable flaw embedded somewhere in the carrier's procedures. This is particularly true of the Jamaica case, where many wondered if the plane should have been landing in such poor conditions.