

AAIB Bulletin No: 1/95

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Category: 1.1

Aircraft Type and Registration: BAe ATP, G-MANJ

No & Type of Engines: 2 Pratt & Whitney PW-126 turboprop engines

Year of Manufacture: 1987

Date & Time (UTC): 26 October 1994 at 0700 hrs

Location: Belfast City Airport

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 4 Passengers - 23

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Minor damage to left outer wing leading edge and de-icing boot; damage to right wingtip and aileron of parked aircraft

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 29 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 3,775 hours (of which 660 were on type)
Last 90 days - 149 hours
Last 28 days - 47 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was to operate the 0700 hrs scheduled passenger service from Belfast City Airport to Manchester. Prior to departure the aircraft was parked at an angle, 'tail-on' to the airport terminal building, between another BAe ATP on its left and a BAe 146 aircraft on its right. The aircraft were parked in close proximity and, because the airport ramp area does not have stand markings or taxi lines, a marshaller had been provided. He had positioned himself by the aircraft's left wing to assist the commander as the aircraft taxied from the ramp. The commander had opened the left cockpit window, that was obscured with condensation, in order to give himself an unobstructed view of the left wingtip as he manoeuvred.

As the aircraft moved slowly from the stand the marshaller signalled to the commander to turn the aircraft to the right. The marshaller reported that the executed turn, however, was not tight enough and, because he anticipated insufficient clearance, he signalled to the commander to stop with the wingtips still some 10 feet apart. The aircraft, however, continued to taxi until the wingtips collided.

The commander reported that the aircraft's left wingtip appeared to be clearing the other aircraft as the marshaller raised his batons to indicate what the commander thought to be the signal for 'all clear'. The marshaller then continued his hand movement and crossed his batons to indicate 'stop'. The commander applied the brakes immediately but, as he did so, the aircraft's left wingtip hit the other aircraft's right wing. After the impact the engines were shut down, ATC were informed and the passengers disembarked.

The commander reported that the accident occurred because he (the commander) had made a misjudgement and not ensured that adequate wingtip clearance was available. He noted that the aircraft are routinely parked in close proximity to each other especially when parked overnight.