

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	1) Boeing 737-33V, G-THOO 2) Boeing 737-36Q, G-THOJ
No & Type of Engines:	1) 2 CFM CFM56-3C1 turbofan engines 2) 2 CFM CFM56-3C1 turbofan engines
Year of Manufacture:	1) 1998 2) 1997
Date & Time (UTC):	28 June 2008 at 2130 hrs
Location:	South Apron, Coventry Airport
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)
Persons on Board:	Crew - Not Provided Passengers - Not provided
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	1) Minor scratching to right winglet 2) Right elevator severely damaged

The following information relates to G-THOO

Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	47 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	9,370 hours (of which 4,166 were on type) Last 90 days - 155 hours Last 28 days - 28 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the commander, investigation reports submitted by the airfield

Synopsis

During pushback the right winglet of G-THOO struck and damaged the right elevator of G-THOJ.

History of the flight

G-THOO, a winglet-equipped 737-300, was scheduled to operate from Coventry to Palma de Mallorca. The aircraft was ready for departure and a pushback ground team consisting of a tug driver and a 'guideman', who was in headset communication with the flight deck crew,

were available. At 2127 hrs G-THOO was pushed back from Stand One. The planned push would turn G-THOO tail towards the passenger terminal before pulling forward to permit engine start. G-THOJ, a 737-300, was parked on Stand Eight which placed it directly behind G-THOO. As G-THOO was turned tail towards the terminal, the right winglet struck the right elevator of G-THOJ. The ground crew then pulled G-THOO back onto Stand One. The incident was not reported to ATC,

Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (RFFS) or airfield operations until approximately 45 minutes later when the aircraft operator's duty engineer telephoned the RFFS.

Damage

The right winglet of G-THOO suffered minor damage and the aircraft was returned to service shortly after the incident. The elevator of G-THOJ was almost completely cut through during the collision and required replacement.

Airfield investigation

Following the event, Coventry Airport conducted an investigation into the accident. This investigation identified a number of findings including the following:

1. Tactical changes to flight timing altered the planned stand usage at the time of departure.
2. The aircraft parking plan required to be produced as part of the airside safety manual appeared to be missing.
3. The procedure for pushbacks identified the 'guideman' as being in charge of the pushback procedure and responsible for ensuring that adequate people are available to monitor the wingtip clearance.

4. The pushback and operations personnel involved did not follow the airfield aerodrome manual procedure for notifying RFFS of a ground incident.

The airfield recommended that the company handling the pushback in this accident address all the above items in addition to conducting risk assessments on pushback procedures for all stands under all possible circumstances. All the Safety Recommendations have been accepted and are being implemented. Subsequently Stand Eight has been withdrawn from use and associated ground equipment parking areas have been removed. This provides a clear area for pushbacks from Stand One.

Conclusion

In this accident there was little risk to staff or passengers but the delay in reporting the event to the RFFS was a significant issue. This and the other findings have been addressed by the airfield's internal investigation report and therefore, no AAIB recommendations are made.