

Boeing 707-138B, N1385R, 21 April 1996

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/96 Ref: EW/G96/04/31 Category: 1.1

Aircraft Type and Registration: Boeing 707-138B, N1385R

No & Type of Engines: 4 PW JT3D-1 turbofan engines

Year of Manufacture: 1951

Date & Time (UTC): 21 April 1996 at 2050 hrs

Location: Stand G10, London Heathrow Airport

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 6 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Nose gear doors and ground power unit

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 62 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 22,710 (of which 8,400 were on type)

Last 90 days - 140 hours

Last 28 days - 65 hours

Information Source:

Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot plus an Occurrence Report from the Stansted Airport Operations Duty Manager

Before landing the flight crew had asked the ground handling agency to provide a GPU at the stand. After a normal landing the aircraft was parked on Stand G10 at 1943 hrs where it was met by approximately five ground handling personnel. During the shutdown process the commander did not receive a signal that chocks were in place and so he ensured that the aircraft's parking brake remained applied. He then exchanged seats with the flight engineer before leaving the flight deck and proceeding to the aft end of the cabin. A few minutes later he felt the aircraft move forward several feet and then stop.

On arrival at the stand the aircraft could not be chocked immediately because there were no chocks on board the tractor towing the GPU. The tractor/GPU combination was parked ahead of the aircraft's nose with the GPU on the right side and the tractor on the left side. Electrical power from the GPU was applied to the aircraft whilst the ground crew returned to their base to fetch chocks in another vehicle. It was during this period that the aircraft rolled forward under its own momentum striking the GPU with the right-hand nose gear door. The GPU was shifted and tilted sideways by the impact but it remained attached to the tractor and the combination halted the aircraft.

Apparently the flight engineer had been informed by the ground crew that chocks were in place and so he released the parking brake. When he did so the aircraft did not move and shortly afterwards, having completed the shutdown checks, the flight engineer vacated the Captain's seat. He was not seated at the controls when the aircraft began to roll forward.