

No: 10/90 **Ref:** EW/G90/08/21 **Category:** 1a

Aircraft Type and Registration: Boeing 747 -300, ZS-SAT

No & Type of Engines: 4 Pratt & Whitney JT9D-7R4G2 turbofan engines

Year of Manufacture: 1983

Date and Time (UTC): 20 August 1990 at 1725 hrs

Location: London Heathrow Airport

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 27 Passengers - 309

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Rear underside fuselage skin including both APU doors, rear pressure bulkhead and flap 'canoe fairing' damaged

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence (SA)

Commander's Age: 44 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 12,066 hours (of which 613 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form and other information submitted

At 1725 hrs, during a normal take-off from runway 27L and, shortly after V_1 , the aircraft was struck by 3 Canada geese which were flying across the mid-section of the runway from the south. Having seen the skein at the last moment, the commander, in an attempt to avoid them, elected to rotate the aircraft slightly earlier and rather more positively than normal and, in so doing scraped the tail section of the aircraft fuselage on the runway. The take-off was continued and the aircraft departed to dump fuel over the sea. Having reduced to an acceptable landing weight, the aircraft returned to Heathrow and landed without further event at 1833 hrs. The following day, when temporary repairs had been effected, the aircraft took off without passengers to return to its base at Jan Smutts Airport, South Africa.

Heathrow Airport operates a bird deterrent and scaring unit throughout the 24 hour day and as is required by special circumstances. They are equipped with a Sherpa van fitted with a loud hailer, enabling the broadcast of recorded bird alarm-cries, and supplied with a Davis bird gun, firing star/cracker shells, and a shot gun. The members of the team are well versed in the migratory patterns and local settling areas of any birds which have been seen in the area and are hazardous to aircraft. To date, this scheme has been successful and, although remaining alert to possible improvements or new ideas, there are no immediate plans to change it.

Following report of the birdstrike, whilst the aircraft was dumping fuel the team discovered 3 Canada geese on Block 81 of the runway and a 36m scrape, including a broken centreline light fitting, some 2325m from the runway threshold. It is stated that on that day the team were very busy with flights of seagulls and, although the normal flight patterns of Canada geese are well known to them, these geese not only arrived from an unusual direction but crossed the centre section of the runway rather than the distant extended runway centrelines where they usually cross. Consequently, they were not sighted before becoming a hazard to flight safety.

Year of Manufacture:	1983
Date and Time (UTC):	30 August 1990 at 1725 hrs
Location:	London Heathrow Airport
Type of Flight:	Public Transport
Persons on Board:	Crew - 27 Passengers - 309
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Rear underside fuselage skin including both APU doors, rear pressure bulkhead and flap/cance fairing damaged
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence (2A)
Commander's Age:	44 years
Commander's Total Flying Experience:	12,066 hours (of which 613 were on type)
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form and other information submitted

At 1725 hrs, during a normal take-off from runway 31L and shortly after V_L, the aircraft was struck by 3 Canada geese which were flying across the mid-section of the runway from the south. Having seen the skin at the last moment, the commander, in an attempt to avoid them, elected to rotate the aircraft slightly earlier and rather more positively than normal and, in so doing, scraped the tail section of the aircraft fuselage on the runway. The take-off was continued and the aircraft departed to dump fuel over the sea. Having reduced to an acceptable landing weight, the aircraft returned to Heathrow and landed without further event at 1833 hrs. The following day, when temporary repairs had been effected, the aircraft took off without passengers to return to its base at San Stanislav Airport, South Africa.

Heathrow Airport operates a bird detection and scaring unit throughout the 24-hour day and as is required by special circumstances. They are equipped with a Shorpa van fitted with a loud hailer, capable of recording bird alarm-cries, and supplied with a Davis bird gun, firing star/cluster shells and a shot gun. The members of the team are well versed in the migratory patterns and local scolding areas of any birds which have been seen in the area and are hazardous to aircraft. To date, this scheme has been successful and, although remaining alert to possible improvements or new ideas, there are no immediate plans to change it.