

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	DHC-8-402 Dash 8, G-JEDV	
No & Type of Engines:	2 Pratt & Whitney Canada PW150A turboprop engines	
Year of Manufacture:	2004	
Date & Time (UTC):	29 November 2011 at 2110 hrs	
Location:	Overhead the Thames Estuary	
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 4	Passengers - 50
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	None	
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	42 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	12,113 hours (of which 1,098 were on type) Last 90 days - 168 hours Last 28 days - 52 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

At FL240, the aircraft began to depressurise, at first slowly but then rapidly. The CABIN PRESS warning activated and the pilots commenced an emergency descent. When level, the pilots carried out a manual depressurisation, following which they landed at their destination. The cause of the depressurisation was not determined.

History of the flight

The aircraft was in the cruise at FL240 over the Thames Estuary when a member of the cabin crew reported that the forward left door was making a loud whistling noise despite appearing to be closed correctly. Information displayed in the flight deck indicated that the door was closed. Shortly afterwards, the pilots noticed that the

cabin altitude was increasing at almost 500 ft/min and, following clearance from ATC, they began a descent towards FL140.

During the descent, the noise from the door increased, the cabin altitude increased rapidly and a red CABIN PRESS warning activated, indicating a loss of cabin pressure. The commander initiated an emergency descent while the co-pilot transmitted a MAYDAY call and both donned their oxygen masks. ATC cleared the aircraft to descend to FL100 and vectored the aircraft for an approach to land at Gatwick Airport.

The pilots reviewed the situation and established that there was no damage to the aircraft and no injuries

to the passengers. They decided that a slow descent to their destination, Southampton Airport, would be preferable to a quicker descent into Gatwick Airport because it would give them time to complete checklist items and brief for the approach. It would also be more comfortable for the passengers. At FL80, the pilots carried out a manual depressurisation and flew an uneventful approach to Southampton Airport, maintaining a low rate of descent.

Operator's assessment of the cause

The operator stated that G-JEDV had suffered several recent pressurisation events. Although no cause for these events was positively identified, following this occurrence the door seal, cabin pressure controller and pressurisation control panel were replaced. At the time of writing, the aircraft had suffered no further pressurisation problems.