

Boeing 737-800, EI-CSA

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| AAIB Bulletin No: 8/2004 | Ref: EW/G2003/12/06 | Category: 1.1 |
| INCIDENT | | |
| Aircraft Type and Registration: | Boeing 737-800, EI-CSA | |
| No & Type of Engines: | 2 CFM 56-7B | |
| Year of Manufacture: | 1999 | |
| Date & Time (UTC): | 18 December 2003 at 1300 hrs | |
| Location: | Stansted, Essex | |
| Type of Flight: | Public Transport (Passenger) | |
| Persons on Board: | Crew - 6 | Passengers - 150 |
| Injuries: | Crew - None | Passengers - None |
| Nature of Damage: | Access panels under APU damaged | |
| Commander's Licence: | Air Transport Pilot's Licence | |
| Commander's Age: | 39 years | |
| Commander's Flying Experience: | 4,947 hours (of which 3,984 were on type) | |
| | Last 90 days - 165 hours | |
| | Last 28 days - 51 hours | |
| Information Source: | Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot | |

The aircraft was being refuelled for departure from Stansted. The passengers were all on board and the flight despatcher had just brought the loadsheet for the commander to check and sign. Whilst the flight crew checked the calculations the despatcher left the flight deck to remove ground steps from the rear of the aircraft. Some minutes later, the crew felt a jolt to the aircraft and were informed that a set of steps had collided with the rear of the aircraft in the vicinity of the Auxiliary Power Unit (APU). All APU cockpit indications were normal but the flight crew called for ground power and shut the APU down for inspection by ground engineers. The refueller had seen the collision, stopped refuelling and immediately disconnected from the aircraft. The inspection revealed considerable damage to the APU access panel. Shortly after the event, the dispatcher reported to the commander that he had hit the rear of the aircraft with a set of steps that were attached to a tug. He had removed the tug from under the right side of the aircraft, reportedly with the intention of using it to remove the steps at the left rear side, and drove under the tail but without realising that another set of steps were attached.