

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	DHC-8-402 Dash 8, G-FLBD	
No & Type of Engines:	2 Pratt & Whitney Canada PW150A turboprop engines	
Year of Manufacture:	2009	
Date & Time (UTC):	23 February 2010 at 1230 hrs	
Location:	Chania Airport, Crete, Greece	
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 5	Passengers - 50
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	None	
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	52 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	11,000 hours (of which 2,200 were on type) Last 90 days - 200 hours Last 28 days - 60 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further enquiries by the AAIB	

Synopsis

The aircraft was on the final approach to Runway 11 at Chania Airport. The crew were carrying out a visual approach using the VOR/DME altitude/range crosschecks to verify the vertical profile. The first 800 metres of the runway was not available and late in the approach the commander, who was the pilot flying, realised that he was positioned for the normal touchdown zone and not the displaced threshold. He adjusted the approach to land at the correct touchdown point.

History of the flight

The crew were to carry out a scheduled flight from Athens Airport to Chania Airport on Crete. The flight was also

to be used for the commander's annual line check which was to be conducted by a Line Training Captain (LTC), who was occupying the jump seat.

They arrived at Athens Airport with adequate time to prepare for the flight and collected their flight documentation before carrying out the pre-flight briefing. A NOTAM for Chania Airport stated that the first 800 metres of Runway 11 was unserviceable and was indicated by closed runway markings. There was resurfacing work in progress and the new length for Runway 11/29 was 2,331 metres. The new Runway 11 threshold was equipped with threshold, side and end lights, with PAPIs installed at the displaced threshold

of Runway 11. The crew discussed the NOTAM as it related to their flight, in particular the performance aspects which were not limited by the runway length. They agreed to review the performance implications when they contacted Chania ATC.

Having completed their preparations, the crew arrived at the aircraft some 30 minutes before departure. The LTC was unable to get his communications station box to work and, as he was unable to monitor the RT or intercom, he cancelled the line check. After a short delay due to some minor changes to the loadsheet, the aircraft departed approximately 10 minutes behind schedule.

The transit to Chania was made at FL190 and took approximately 40 minutes. Having listened to the ATIS, the commander carried out the approach brief which was to be a VOR/DME approach to Runway 11. The weather was good, with calm wind, CAVOK, temperature 13°C, dew point 8°C and QNH 1013 hPa. Given the weather conditions, the commander stated that he would probably carry out a visual approach but did not mention the displaced threshold.

Following the descent and with approximately 30 nm to go, the commander declared his intention to continue visually and adjusted the aircraft track to position onto a 10 nm final approach. The aircraft was configured in accordance with the standard operating procedures and the co-pilot monitored the approach by calling out the range and altitude crosschecks. The runway was clearly visible throughout the approach but both the commander, who was the pilot flying, and the co-pilot had forgotten about the displaced threshold and continued towards the normal Runway 11 touchdown point. The LTC began to be concerned that this may be the case and late in the approach he intervened. At

the same time, the commander realised the situation and increased power to adjust the flight path for the displaced threshold. The aircraft touched down safely at the correct point on the runway and taxied to the terminal building.

Following a discussion about the incident, the crew did not recall any information regarding the displaced runway on the ATIS and ATC had not reminded them in any of their transmissions. The closed runway markings had not stood out in the bright sunlight and none of the crew could remember the PAPIs being illuminated.

Airport information

Chania ATC provided transcripts for the Approach (118.125 MHz) and Tower (122.1 MHz) controllers and the Automatic Terminal Information System (ATIS) (130.175 MHz) covering the relevant period. The reduced runway length was included in the ATIS information “HOTEL”, issued between 1003 hrs and 1130 hrs, as well as the preceding and subsequent transmissions. It stated:

“RUNWAY IN USE 11 CAUTION ADVISED RUNWAY 11
NEW THRESHOLD LOCATED 1017 METRES
INWARDS.”

Whilst the controllers did not include in their transmissions the reduced runway length, the Approach controller did confirm that the crew had copied “INFORMATION HOTEL”. The information regarding the threshold had been included in all ATIS transmissions since 15 February 2010.

The airport authority also stated that the runway markings were correct and that the PAPIs were in order.

Analysis

The crew did not recall hearing the information on the ATIS regarding the displaced threshold. The commander considered that, having forgotten about the displaced threshold, he carried out a normal visual approach using the VOR/DME information provided by the co-pilot to adjust his vertical profile. His

adjustment of the approach path ensured a safe landing but, following further consideration, a go-around followed by a second approach may have been a better option. Additionally, when a third crew member is present they should assist the operating crew at the earliest opportunity if they observe potentially incorrect practices or procedures.