

No: 12/91

Ref: EW/C91/10/3

Category: 1a

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Boeing 767-323ER, N361AA  
**No & Type of Engines:** 2 General Electric CF6-80C2 turbofan engines  
**Year of Manufacture:** 1988  
**Date & Time (UTC):** 31 October 1991 at 1057 hrs  
**Location:** Stand H5, Terminal 3, London Heathrow Airport  
**Type of Flight:** Public Transport  
**Persons on Board:** Crew - 14 Passengers - 187  
**Injuries:** Crew - None Passengers - None  
**Nature of Damage:** Minor dent at top of left engine cowl lip  
**Commander's Licence:** FAA Airline Transport Pilot's Licence  
**Commander's Age:** 50 years  
**Commander's Flying Experience:** 13,500 hours (of which 450 were on type)  
**Information Source:** AAIB Field Investigation

The aircraft was being taxied to its allocated parking stand after an overnight transatlantic extended range operation. The flight deck crew consisted of three pilots. The commander was a "check airman" occupying the right hand seat. He was conducting a transatlantic check on the acting captain in the left hand seat. A first officer occupied the centre jump seat. Aircraft handling and taxi was being undertaken by the pilot in the left seat. Of the three pilots, only the commander had visited London Heathrow Airport previously, on one occasion. During that visit he had operated from a different parking stand, under marshalling guidance.

As the aircraft approached Terminal 3 stand H5, at the end of a cul-de-sac, the centreline guidance system (AGNIS - Azimuth Guidance for Nose In Stands) enabled the aircraft to be correctly positioned on the stand centreline. As this stand was designated as self manoeuvring, the crew were expecting to see, adjacent to the AGNIS indicator, a marker board showing which method of stop guidance was in use on this particular stand. No such board was present, and the PAPA (Parallax Aircraft Parking Aid) system, although illuminated to the right side of the stand, was not observed by the crew. The aircraft was therefore taxied to a position which was assumed to be correct for docking with the innermost airbridge on this gate. However, just as the aircraft came to a halt, the left engine cowl lip contacted the vertical support of the outer airbridge, causing minor indentation. It is not possible to

check visually, from either pilot's seat, the position of the engines in relation to any obstacles. At the time of the incident, the crew had been on duty for just over 12 hours.

The aircraft was shut down, and the passengers deplaned through the right hand side, as the left side doors were not aligned with the airbridges.

Prior to arrival, the crew had routinely self-briefed on the Heathrow arrival procedures, and parking information. This data was obtained from the company standard "Jeppesen" charts, which stated that "...each AGNIS unit will be labelled to provide a visual indication of the type of stopping device provided on a particular stand. The labels will be standardised and will comprise the letters SMB (Side Marker Board) or PAPA in block lettering on a yellow background. The board will be mounted adjacent to the AGNIS unit on each stand equipped with Stand Entry Guidance."

Located above the AGNIS unit on stand H5 was a "STOP SHORT" indicator, which was not illuminated at the time of the incident.

The United Kingdom Aeronautical Information Publication (CAP 32) entry in the AGA section for London Heathrow states that "...the relevant stopping device is indicated at the AGNIS position."

Subsequent inspection of several stands in the vicinity revealed that a significant proportion were not labelled as to the type of stopping aid available.

Recommendations have therefore been made to the Civil Aviation Authority that the marking of each self manoeuvring stand should be brought up to the required standard at all U.K. airports, and that the information contained in UK AIP be expanded to present a more detailed description of the characteristics and aids available at each self manoeuvring stand.