

Information Source:

Aircraft Accident Report Forms submitted by the pilots

Both aircraft were parked adjacent to the terminal building at Norwich. The B737, parked on Stand 2, was cleared by ATC to taxi for departure. The commander of the B737 stated that he was given the 'all clear' from the ground engineer and increased thrust from idle to 30% to 35% N1. This thrust setting was insufficient to move the aircraft so power was increased to 35% to 40% N1. After approximately 50 metres of travel the ground engineer signalled the commander to stop. A strip of tarmac, peeled from the apron surface, had become attached to the aircraft's nosewheel tyre. This was removed, the remaining landing gear was examined and the aircraft continued to taxi.

The commander of the ATR 72, parked on Stand 3, stated that, as the B737 taxied from the apron a wooden board was dislodged from a nearby baggage truck by the jet blast and struck and damaged the fin of his aircraft. The commander of the B737 was not aware of this incident as he continued to taxi.

The Airfield Operations Director had a clear view of the incident from his office window which overlooks the apron. He reported that the nosewheel of the B737 was set 'almost at right angles' as the aircraft attempted to taxi. As the aircraft tried to move he noticed that the nosewheel tyres appeared to be shredding. He immediately informed ATC and as he did so the B737 reduced power, the nosewheel steering angle was reduced by 10° to 15° and the aircraft started to roll backwards. This backwards movement was arrested by a further increase in power. The aircraft's tail, which had been parked pointing clear of other parked aircraft, was now directed at the ATR 72. At this point a 6' x 4' wooden board, used as the floor and battery compartment cover, was dislodged from an electric baggage trolley. The Operations Director discovered later that what appeared to him to be a shredded tyre was in fact a 2 feet length of tarmac crack sealing strip which had been peeled from the surface by action of the B737's nosewheel. The air temperature at the time of the incident was 19°C.

As a result of this incident Norwich Airport has revised its ramp procedures and re-surveyed its ramp markings and clearances.