

INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Let 410 UVP-E, OK-UBA
No & Type of Engines:	2 Walter M601E turboprop engines
Year of Manufacture:	1989
Date & Time (UTC):	18 January 2007 at 1114 hrs
Location:	Ronaldsway Airport, Isle of Man
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2 Passengers - 2
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to the left tip fuel tank
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	46 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	2,030 hours (of which 1,170 were on type) Last 90 days - 77 hours Last 28 days - 32 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

The aircraft was taxiing in strong winds for a scheduled departure. During one particular gust the aircraft was tipped briefly on to its left wing tip fuel tank before settling back on to the landing gear. There were no injuries and the aircraft was towed back on to stand with the damage limited to the wing tip fuel tank. The aircraft had been taxiing in winds which were gusting to 57 kt. Since the incident, the operator has introduced a wind speed limit for ground operations.

History of the flight

The aircraft was taxiing for a scheduled departure from Runway 26 at Ronaldsway Airport, Isle of Man. The surface wind was from 260° at 37 kt, gusting to

57 kt; the visibility was good and there were scattered cumulonimbus cloud at 2,000 ft agl.

The aircraft taxied from Stand 11 on the main apron, along Taxiways F and A towards holding point A2. The commander reported that, while he was taxiing out, he decided to abort the flight and return to the stand because of the strength of the wind. As he was approaching holding point A2, and before he was able to advise ATC of his intentions, a strong gust of wind lifted the right wing sufficient for the left wing tip fuel tank to touch the ground. The aircraft then settled back on to its landing gear and the crew brought it to a stop. At the time of the incident the wind was from the aircraft's right quarter.

The Airfield Fire and Rescue Service attended the aircraft but there was no fuel leak and none of the passengers or crew was injured. The passengers were returned to the terminal by coach and the aircraft was towed back on to stand. The left wing tip fuel tank was damaged.

In assessing the cause of the incident, the commander, who had 170 hrs experience as pilot-in-command on the Let 410, stated that he did not realise that the wind at the time was strong enough to lift the right wing.

Aircraft information

The manufacturer does not specify a wind speed limit for ground operations. However, since the incident, the operator has introduced a wind speed limit of 40 kt for all ground operations, with the exception that this can be increased to 45 kt for commanders with more than 300 hrs as PIC on the Let 410. The wind speed at any time is calculated as the sum of the steady wind plus half the gust factor: eg for a steady wind of 30 kt, which is gusting to 50 kt (gust factor 20 kt), the sum equals 40 kt.