

Jetstream 4100, G-MAJA, 5 January 2000

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Aircraft Type and Registration: Jetstream 4100, G-MAJA

No & Type of Engines: 2 Garrett Airesearch TPE 331-14GR/HR-807H turboprop engines

Year of Manufacture: 1994

Date & Time (UTC): 5 January 2000 at 1409 hrs

Location: Manchester International Airport

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 3 - Passengers - 29

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Scorching of paint around ground power receptacle

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 35 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 2,610 hours (of which 505 were on type)

Last 90 days - 128 hours

Last 28 days - 54 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft had just taxied to its stand after a domestic flight and the crew had completed their shutdown checks. A ground power unit (GPU) had then been positioned close to the right of the aircraft's nose and the connector socket on the GPU lead was plugged into the aircraft ground power receptacle. The GPU had been started and initially emitted what was regarded as a 'normal amount' of black smoke, but very quickly it was noticed by both the aircraft commander (from reflections in the docking guidance system mirror) and the ground handling engineer that flames were emanating from around the ground power receptacle on the nose of the aircraft.

The commander immediately ordered an evacuation of the aircraft through the exits on the left side and the ground handling engineer shutdown the GPU and attempted to get the fire extinguisher from the GPU to extinguish the fire. However, because the GPU was parked close to the aircraft's nose, he was unable to access the extinguisher and therefore asked the flight crew to give him the cockpit fire extinguisher. Whilst this was being passed down from the DV window, the engineer

did manage to get to the GPU extinguisher and then used it to extinguish the fire around the ground power connector.

Meanwhile the cabin crew had co-ordinated the evacuation of all the passengers, some of whom had used the left overwing exit, and when they had all been evacuated the crew also left the aircraft. The passengers were then assembled upwind of the aircraft and a headcount completed.

Subsequent examination of the aircraft revealed that the paint around the ground power receptacle was scorched and sooted. It was also observed that the connector on the GPU power lead was badly overheated and two of the four cables had burned through. The electrical connector on this GPU had been observed to be overheating on a previous occasion and this fault had been brought to the attention of the organisation which maintained the GPU for the operator. It was reported that on the day prior to the incident this maintenance company had examined the GPU connector and declared it to be fit for service.