

AAIB Bulletin No: 10/94

Ref: EW/G94/06/37

Category: 1.1

Aircraft Type and Registration: Douglas DC-9-83, OH-LMU

No & Type of Engines: 2 Pratt and Whitney JT8D-219 turbofan engines

Year of Manufacture: 1989

Date & Time (UTC): 30 June 1994 at 0930 hrs

Location: Cardiff Airport, Wales

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 5 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Substantial to left wingtip trailing edge panel

Commander's Licence: N/A

Commander's Age: N/A

Commander's Flying Experience: N/A

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the Operator

The aircraft had been towed and parked on Stand 12 at Cardiff Airport in preparation for a departure at 1030 hrs. The aircraft had been parked short of the usual position due to another aircraft parked on Stand 14. Cones had been positioned at the rear of the tail section as this was protruding over the apron roadway. On board the aircraft at the time were the cabin crew and a ground engineer, who was on the flight deck carrying out pre-flight checks. The flight crew had not yet arrived. The aircraft's parking brake was selected 'ON' with chocks in position. A refuelling unit was connected to the left side of the aircraft, although refuelling had not yet commenced, and at the same time a Bedford catering vehicle was replenishing the front and rear galleys. The rear galley being catered by way of the left-hand service door.

Once catering was complete the vehicle reversed from the left rear service door, with the aid of a marshaller, clear of the aircraft. The marshaller, however, was positioned on the vehicle's 'offside' and unable to see the wingtip. The driver reported that he followed the marshaller's directions but was confused by the cones positioned around the aircraft. Moments later the 'nearside' rear corner of the 'Hi-lift' body of the vehicle struck the left wingtip trailing edge. The aircraft engineer disconnected the AC electrical power, selected the batteries 'OFF', informed the cabin crew and the airport fire service.

The cause of the accident was assessed as being due to the incorrect positioning of the marshaller relative to the aircraft.