

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Boeing 737-8AS, EI-EXF
No & Type of Engines:	2 CFM56-7B26E turbofan engines
Year of Manufacture:	2012 (Serial no: 40322)
Date & Time (UTC):	3 December 2014 at 0815 hrs
Location:	London Stansted Airport
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)
Persons on Board:	Crew - 6 Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Forward fuselage skin damaged
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	Not applicable
Commander's Flying Experience:	Not applicable
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

A baggage tractor struck the fuselage when approaching the forward cargo hold to offload bags, after all passengers had disembarked. The impact was felt by the crew, and the commander discovered dents and scrapes to the skin on the right, lower fuselage. This damage extended almost 1.5 m forward from the cargo hold bay and the aircraft was removed from commercial service for several days while it was repaired.

An investigation by the ground handling company established that the tractor struck the aircraft when the driver attempted to begin offloading bags, without assistance and without using a belt loader vehicle. The company requires a belt loader to be used and the presence of a safety person before a vehicle approaches within three metres of an aircraft. These procedures were not adhered to when the tractor driver tried to expedite the offload of an aircraft that had arrived ahead of schedule.

Company procedures were reviewed following this accident. The ground handling teams were re-briefed and their standards and processes were audited.

This accident was similar to one involving another Boeing 737-8AS (EI-EBR), at London Luton Airport, on 17 December 2014.