

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Airbus A320-214, G-EZTM	
No & Type of Engines:	2 CFM56-5B4/3 turbofan engines	
Year of Manufacture:	2009 (Serial no: 4014)	
Date & Time (UTC):	26 March 2017 at 1400 hrs	
Location:	Stand 559, London Gatwick Airport	
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 7	Passengers - 161
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Fuselage and Door 1L damaged	
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	26 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	4,100 hours (of which 3,834 were on type) Last 90 days - 79 hours Last 28 days - 31 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

Whilst parked on stand and following maintenance action to resolve a brake system indication fault, the aircraft moved backwards and struck ground equipment, damaging the fuselage and Door 1L.

History of the flight

The aircraft was parked on stand and a brake system defect, which had occurred on the previous sector, was being investigated. As part of this process, Aircraft Maintenance Manual (AMM) Task 32-42-00-710-001-A Rev.55 was being actioned. This required the parking brake to be selected OFF. On completion of the task it remained in the OFF position, as there was no requirement in the task to select the parking brake ON again.

The flight crew had arrived at the aircraft prior to the maintenance activity and had completed their cockpit preparation checks, which included confirming the parking brake was ON. The flight crew were therefore unaware that the parking brake had been set to OFF as part of the later maintenance activity.

Prior to departure, with the forward steps still in position, the ground handling staff arrived and connected a tug, before removing the chocks as part of their pre-departure checks. The operator's procedures required the chocks to remain in place until all ground equipment is clear of the aircraft. The tug driver then realised the tug radio was not working and

disconnected the tug to replace it with a fully serviceable one. There was no communication with the flight crew at this point. When the tug was disconnected the aircraft moved backwards and struck the steps, causing damage to the aircraft fuselage and Door 1L. The flight crew noticed the aircraft was moving and applied the footbrakes to bring it to a halt.

There were no injuries and the occupants disembarked the aircraft via a rear door.

Conclusions

The aircraft was able to move as a result of:

1. Maintenance activity which had left the parking brake OFF after the flight crew had previously confirmed it as being ON as part of their cockpit preparation checks, and
2. Ground handling staff had removed the chocks before the ground equipment was clear of the aircraft, contrary to the operator's procedures.

When the tug was disconnected from the aircraft, there was nothing to prevent the aircraft from moving and colliding with the steps.

Safety actions

The operator's engineering department is reviewing the AMM task (32-42-00-710-001-A Rev.55) and will make recommendations to the aircraft manufacturer to amend the AMM accordingly.

The ground handling company has undertaken the following actions to prevent a recurrence:

1. Raised awareness of the event;
2. Retrained the staff involved concerning the correct chocking procedures;
3. The defective equipment local operating procedure has been re-issued to all staff to prevent inoperative equipment being available for use.