

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Antonov AN12, UR-CKL	
No & Type of Engines:	4 Ivchenko AI-20 turboprop engines	
Year of Manufacture:	1971	
Date & Time (UTC):	30 September 2019 at 1120 hrs	
Location:	Liverpool Airport	
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Cargo)	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 7	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to the outer left wing leading edge	
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	56 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	14,802 hours (of which 14,492 were on type) Last 90 days - 56 hours Last 28 days - 21 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The aircraft's left wing struck a lighting stand whilst leaving its parking stand. The aircraft had been parked in a position where the crew could not see the stand's ground guidance markings and there was no marshaller to guide them.

History of the flight

The operator had been involved in a series of flights to Liverpool Airport, but the airport did not have access to a suitable tow bar for use with the aircraft each time it had arrived. As a result, the aircraft had been parked on Stand 41, described in the AIP¹ as a 'taxi in/push back' stand, under the guidance of a marshaller, so that it was in a position to be able to taxi off the stand without needing to be pushed back.

On the day of the accident, as before, the aircraft had been parked after its arrival under the guidance of a marshaller on Stand 41. By guiding the aircraft to turn onto the stand during the parking manoeuvre this had resulted in the left wing protruding between two lighting stands located at the southern edge of the stand area. The intention was for the aircraft to continue the turn when taxiing off the stand which would allow its wing to clear the lighting stand in front.

Footnote

¹ UK Aeronautical Information Publication.

The aircraft was unloaded and prepared for its next flight by the flight crew. Having started the engines, the crew called ATC for taxi clearance and were cleared to taxi for Runway 27. They later stated that they had no taxi markings to guide them off the stand and no 'Follow Me Vehicle' to follow. There was a ground handling agent in attendance, although it was not his role to provide marshalling guidance to the crew.

The crew stated they taxied the aircraft forward, but after moving about 15-20 m they felt an impact and immediately stopped the aircraft, shutting down the engines. On inspection it became apparent that the leading edge of the outer section of the left wing had collided with the lighting stand situated in front of the aircraft.

Airfield information

The airport operations department reported that parking the aircraft on Stand 41 offered a solution to the absence of a suitable tow bar. This had not caused any issues during previous visits by the aircraft to the airport. It was daylight at the time of the accident and it was considered the presence of the lighting stands and the aircraft's position relative to them would have been obvious to the crew. The operations department also believed that had the crew had any concerns about taxiing off the stand they would have called ATC for assistance.

Comment

The airport had accommodated the fact an appropriate tow bar was not available for the aircraft by parking it on an existing stand in a manner not intended for that stand. Whilst this enabled the aircraft to leave the stand without needing to be pushed back, it had put the wing in a position where it was in danger of colliding with the lighting stand. This foreseeable outcome might have indicated the need for appropriate guidance to be made available to, and requested by, the crew to ensure adequate clearance from the lighting stand.

Safety action

The airport has re-designated Stands 11-14 and 33-41 to allow parking by self-manoeuvring. The AIP entry has been updated to inform pilots that under such circumstances a marshaller will be available during departure and to instruct pilots to request assistance at any time they need it when taxiing.