

Boeing 737-8AS, EI-CSM

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INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration: Boeing 737-8AS, EI-CSM

No & Type of Engines: 2 CFM56-7 turbofan engines

Year of Manufacture: 2000

Date & Time (UTC): 2 November 2002 at 1507 hrs

Location: London-Stansted Airport, Essex

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 5 Passengers - 136

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Number eight slat damaged

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilots Licence

Commander's Age: 40 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 6,946 hours (of which 2,100 were on type)
Last 90 days - 252 hours
Last 28 days - 88 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was parked nose-in on stand D62R at the satellite terminal at Stansted Airport. The flight was ready to depart for Trieste in Northern Italy with the passengers on board and the doors closed.

A driver had parked a set of steps attached to a tug at the terminal end of the stand some 20 minutes earlier. He returned as the aircraft doors were being closed to move the tug which was required for another task. He believed that he had disconnected the steps from the tug when he parked it but he had not done so and he drove the combination across the stand instead of along the inter-stand clearway as required. Still unaware that the steps were attached, he drove under the right wing tip of the aircraft and the top of the steps contacted the number eight slat causing significant damage.

The commander felt the aircraft move violently sideways to the right and the nose rocked from side to side. He thought that his aircraft had been struck by another aircraft and checked the aircraft reflection in the windows of the satellite terminal. Seeing no other aircraft he leaned across the co-pilot, who had opened his window, and saw liquid coming from the right wing tip. The commander confirmed with the ground engineer that it was not fuel and then had the ground power connected, which was immediately available and shut down the APU as a precautionary measure. The liquid was water, which had accumulated on the upper wing surface.

ATC were informed of the incident by radio on the Ground frequency and the Rescue and Fire Fighting Services were dispatched. The commander advised the passengers of the situation using the aircrafts public address system and then left the aircraft to inspect the damage. The aircraft was withdrawn from service for repairs and the passengers vacated the aircraft by the normal exit.