

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Airbus A319-111, G-EZDN
No & Type of Engines:	2 CFM CFM56-5B5/3 turbofan engines
Year of Manufacture:	2008 (Serial no: 3608)
Date & Time (UTC):	14 May 2012 at 1743 hrs
Location:	Liverpool John Lennon Airport
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)
Persons on Board:	Crew - 6 Passengers - 83
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to right wing trailing edge and right aileron
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	29 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	4,741 hours (of which 3,941 were on type) Last 90 days - 197 hours Last 28 days - 65 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

During pushback from its stand at Liverpool Airport, the aircraft's right wing trailing edge struck a set of steps which had been positioned to service another aircraft arriving on the adjacent stand.

History of the flight

G-EZDN was positioned on Stand 53 at Liverpool Airport, ready for departure with the steps removed and the slides armed. All cabin and flight deck checks had been completed and the Pilot Flying (PF) made headset contact with the ground crew, who confirmed that all the external checks had been completed and that the aircraft was ready for dispatch. ATC were contacted for pushback and start clearance by the Pilot Not Flying (PNF). Clearance was given subject to the arrival

of another company aircraft on Stand 52, which was immediately to the right of Stand 53. This conditional clearance was relayed to the ground crew whilst the pre-start checks were completed and the anti-collision beacons were switched on.

The other aircraft arrived on Stand 52 and the ground crew requested brakes release. The pushback proceeded but, after about 20 metres into the push with the aircraft still travelling in a straight line, an impact was felt and the tug slowed to a halt. The commander contacted the ground crew, who said they believed there had been a problem and the aircraft had struck something. The aircraft was towed back onto Stand 53, with no abnormal indications on the flight deck.

The commander and the cabin staff ensured that all the normal arrival checks were completed before the passengers were disembarked normally. The local engineering support advised that the right wing had received significant damage and the aircraft was now unserviceable. The aircraft had struck a set of steps intended to receive the aircraft on Stand 52. It was intended that they would be positioned at the rear left door of the inbound aircraft and had been moved backwards so that the left wing would clear them. Unfortunately, this meant that the steps now encroached into the pushback sensitive area of G-EZDN, despite the fact that the aircraft anti-collision lights were flashing and the external walk round by the ground handling agent had reported that the area was clear.

The aircraft operator confirms that the following safety actions have been taken:

- 1) A communication has been distributed to the ground handling staff throughout the operator's network to highlight the importance of a thorough walk round immediately prior to aircraft departure.
- 2) The ground handling agents' procedures have been altered to prohibit the parking of ground equipment in areas other than those designated by markings.