

Follow-up Action on Occurrence Report

SERIOUS INCIDENT INVOLVING AIRBUS A320-214, G-OOAR, AT KEFALLINIA, ON 27 OCTOBER 2002
(AIRCRAFT PITCHED UP ON TAKEOFF DUE TO A LOADING PROBLEM)

CAA FACTOR NUMBER : F8/2004
FACTOR PUBLICATION DATE : 12 February 2004
OPERATOR : Air 2000
CAA OCCURRENCE NUMBER : 2002/07812
AAIB REPORT : Bulletin 1/2004

SYNOPSIS

(From AAIB Report)

The aircraft had been positioned, empty, from Gatwick to Kefallinia in preparation for public transport charter flights back to Gatwick via Zakinthos. On its arrival at Kefallinia 69 passengers boarded the aircraft prior to the short sector to Zakinthos. The commander was the handling pilot for this flight, which was preparing to depart from Runway 32. The surface wind was from 250° at 4 kt.

Having lined up on the runway for takeoff, the commander advanced the thrust levers to 50% N1 while holding the aircraft against the brakes. Once the engine parameters had stabilised he released the brakes and advanced the thrust levers to the take-off position. As the aircraft started its take-off roll the nose pitched up rapidly. The commander reduced the thrust to idle immediately and applied forward side-stick and gentle braking to encourage the aircraft to pitch back down, which it did promptly. The aircraft had very little forward speed and was quickly brought to a halt on the runway. Having liaised with the cabin crew, and made an announcement to reassure the passengers, the commander taxied the aircraft slowly back on to the stand whence it had just departed. There were no injuries; however, one of the cabin crew seated at the rear of the cabin had heard a scraping noise after the aircraft had pitched up. On investigation the flight crew discovered that all the passengers were seated aft of row 13, which was significantly different from the distribution shown on the Load Form and Trim Sheet. These forms indicated that the passengers had been spread evenly through the cabin. An examination of the underneath of the tail of the aircraft revealed that the rear galley drain mast had been damaged. While conducting this external check, the first officer (FO) also saw that the nose oleo was very noticeably extended, which suggested a possible problem with the position of the CG.

FOLLOW UP ACTION

The two Safety Recommendations, made by the AAIB following their investigation, are reproduced below, together with the CAA's responses.

Recommendation 2003-104

It is recommended that Air 2000 review the advice given to handling agents at outstations to ensure that the commanders of the company's aircraft are in possession of all the relevant loading information before they compile a Trim Sheet.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

However the CAA can confirm that Air 2000 has published a revision to their Ramp Manual which emphasises the correct loading procedures to be followed by all their handling agents.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2003-105

It is recommended that Air 2000 review the training given to Flight Supervisors for the Airbus A320 with regard to passenger distribution in the cabin and its effect on the CG of the aircraft.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

However the CAA can confirm that Air 2000 has published a revision to their Cabin Crew Safety Manual emphasising the importance of an even distribution of passengers throughout the cabin, and the requirement for the Flight Supervisor to inform the Captain if this is not the case. Their Cabin Crew recurrent training requirements and the content of their Flight Supervisor training course have been revised to reflect this.

CAA Status - Closed