

Follow-up Action on Occurrence Report

**SERIOUS INCIDENT INVOLVING BOEING B757-236, G-CPER, DURING CLIMB OUT FROM LONDON HEATHROW AIRPORT ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2003
(AIRCRAFT CONTROL PROBLEMS DURING DIVERSION TO GATWICK FOLLOWING INCIDENT OF FUMES IN COCKPIT)**

CAA FACTOR NUMBER : F43/2005
FACTOR PUBLICATION DATE : 15 December 2005
OPERATOR : British Airways
CAA OCCURRENCE NUMBER : 2003/06174
AAIB REPORT : AAR 3/2005

SYNOPSIS

(From AAIB Report)

The incident to the Boeing 757 aircraft occurred on the first flight following a 26-day major maintenance check. Shortly after take-off on a scheduled passenger flight from London Heathrow to Paris, a hot oil smell, that had been present in the cockpit on engine startup, returned. The flight crew donned oxygen masks and immediately diverted to London Gatwick Airport. During the autopilot-coupled ILS approach to Gatwick, the aircraft drifted to the right of the localiser after selection of Flap 30. When the autopilot was disconnected, a large amount of manual left roll control was needed to prevent the aircraft from turning to the right. It was necessary to maintain this control input until touch down. The aircraft landed safely despite these difficulties, with no injuries to any of the passengers or crew.

The investigation determined that the incident had been caused by maintenance errors that had culminated in the failure to reinstall two access panels, 666AR and 666BR, on the right-hand outboard flap and incorrect procedures being used to service engine oils. The events were the result of a combination of errors on the part of the individuals involved and systemic issues, that had greatly increased the possibility of such errors being committed.

The following immediate causal factors were identified:

1. The tasks of refitting the panels to the right wing and correctly certifying for the work carried out were not performed to the required airworthiness standard.
2. Ineffective supervision of maintenance staff had allowed working practices to develop that had compromised the level of airworthiness control and had become accepted as the 'norm'.
3. There was a culture, both on the ramp and in the maintenance hangar, which was not effective in ensuring that maintenance staff operated within the scope of their company authorisation and in accordance with approved instructions.
4. The maintenance planning and task instructions, relating to oil servicing on the Boeing 757 fleet, were inappropriate and did not ensure compliance with the approved instructions.
5. The Airline's Quality Assurance Programme was not effective in highlighting these unsatisfactory maintenance practices.

Eight safety recommendations are made in this report, with the intention of preventing similar incidents in the future.

FOLLOW UP ACTION

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

Recommendation 2005-116

British Airways Maintenance Organisation should take suitable action to ensure that maintenance tasks are certified for in a sequential and timely manner. All maintenance staff should also be reminded of their professional responsibilities, the limit of their authorisation, and that approval from the appropriate authority is required when it becomes necessary to deviate from approved instructions and procedures.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-117

British Airways Maintenance Organisation should review job card rack replacement ergonomics to ensure that their positioning does not have a detrimental effect on the sequential and timely certification of maintenance tasks.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-118

British Airways Maintenance Organisation should review their 'Maintenance Error Investigation' process, in order to ensure consistency, traceability and accountability in its application, with a view to restoring the confidence of maintenance staff in the process.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-119

British Airways Maintenance Organisation should review the level of supervision on the 'shop floor' to satisfy itself that it is adequate to maintain the required standards of airworthiness.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-120

British Airways should review their structure and procedures for the management of quality, to satisfy themselves that there is sufficient degree of centralised control over the standards of quality within each section of the organisation.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-121

British Airways Maintenance Organisation should review its maintenance planning and production control procedures, for the servicing of B757 engine oils, to ensure compliance with the aircraft Maintenance Manual at all times, in both operational and heavy maintenance environments.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-122

British Airways Maintenance Organisation should take suitable actions to ensure that the Engineering Quality Services department has a better oversight and understanding of the day to day practices in the areas where maintenance is carried out.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-123

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) should consider introducing a requirement to carry out a duplicate inspection on aircraft access panels, removed and refitted or opened and closed as part of a maintenance procedure, that could significantly affect airworthiness if incorrectly secured and should detach in flight, endanger either the aircraft, or persons on the ground.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed