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COMISIÓN DE
INVESTIGACIÓN
DE ACCIDENTES
E INCIDENTES DE
AVIACIÓN CIVIL

Interim statement IN-036/2013

Incident involving a Boeing 737-800 aircraft, registration G-FDZG, operated by Thomson Airways, while on approach to the Fuerteventura airport (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain) on 22 August 2013



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SUBSECRETARÍA

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Important notice

This document constitutes the interim statement envisioned in Article 16.7 of Regulation (EU) no. 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as well as in paragraph 6.6 of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The statement includes the details of the progress of the investigation and the most important operational safety issues revealed to date. The information provided herein is subject to change as the investigation proceeds.

Pursuant to the contents of Regulation (EU) no. 96/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council and of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the investigation is purely technical in nature and is not intended to determine or apportion blame or liability. The investigation is being conducted without necessarily resorting to evidentiary procedures and for the sole purpose of preventing future accidents.

Consequently, the use of this information for any purpose other than to prevent future accidents may result in faulty conclusions or interpretations.

Abbreviations

AENA	Spanish Airports and Air Navigation Directorate
ATPL (A)	Airline Transport Pilot License (Aircraft)
EGKK	Gatwick airport (UK) ICAO code
GCFV	Fuerteventura airport (Spain) ICAO code
GCRR	Lanzarote airport (Spain) ICAO code
QAR	Quick Access Recorder
UTC	Universal Time Coordinated
VHF	Very High Frequency
VOR	VHF Omnidirectional Range

DATA SUMMARY

LOCATION

Date and time	Thursday, 22 August 2013 at 10:50¹
Site	Approach phase to the Fuerteventura Airport (GCFV) (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain)

AIRCRAFT

Registration	G-FDZG
Type and model	Boeing-737-800
Operator	Thomson Airways

Engines

Type and model	CFM International CFM56-7B27
Number	2

CREW

	Pilot	First officer
Age	59	42
License	ATPL(A)	ATPL(A)
Total flight hours	12.060	5.300
Flight hours on the type	780	1.150

INJURIES

	Fatal	Serious	Minor / None
Crew			7
Passengers			169
Third persons			

DAMAGE

Aircraft	None
Third parties	None

FLIGHT DATA

Operation	Commercial air transport - International - Passenger
Phase of flight	Approach

INTERIM STATEMENT

Date of approval	23 July 2014
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¹ All times in this report are local. To convert to UTC, subtract one hour from local time.

1. INFORMATION ON THE INCIDENT

On Thursday, 22 August 2013, aircraft G-FDZG, a Boeing 737-800 operated by Thomson Airways, was making its approach maneuver at the destination airport on the island of Lanzarote (GCRR). The scheduled flight with 176 people onboard had originated at the London Gatwick (EGKK) airport.

After planning the approach to runway 03, they received instructions when on the downwind leg to fly over the LTE VOR and make a VOR approach to runway 21, as dictated by the changing wind conditions. Once on final approach, a sudden change in the wind destabilized the approach, as a result of which the crew executed a go-around.

The change in the runway in use at Lanzarote, which returned to its original configuration with runway 03 in use half an hour later, caused congestion problems for the Canaries Approach ACC. This sector is made complex by the proximity of the Lanzarote and Fuerteventura (GCFV) airports, and by how certain runway configurations affect maneuvers between the two airports. In an effort to route arriving traffic, the aircraft were directed to different holding patterns.

Given the problems with arriving traffic, the crew decided to proceed to the alternate airport on the island of Fuerteventura, where they were cleared to make a visual approach. Since the fuel remaining was approaching reserve fuel, the crew declared an emergency (MAYDAY).

The landing proceeded normally and the passengers deplaned in an orderly fashion. There was no need to make an emergency evacuation.

2. PROGRESS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The investigation focused on the following aspects:

- Analysis of the flight planning as well as of the execution of the go-around maneuver and the coordination between the crewmembers. The airplane and crew performances were reviewed using the data obtained from the quick access recorder (QAR). The company's documentation and the instruction received by the crew were also reviewed. Radar tracks have been analyzed too.
- Analysis of the actions of the controllers on duty at the Lanzarote and Fuerteventura Control Towers, as well as at the Canaries Approach ACC. The actions of the controllers involved in the incident and the coordination methods were reviewed.
- Analysis of the weather information available to the controllers and crew.
- Analysis of the problems specific to the approach sector in question and possible solutions, as well as of the coordination between said sector and the affected Control Towers.

3. NEXT STEPS

The investigation is waiting for Enaire (formerly AENA Air Navigation) to approve the mitigative measures intended to resolve the problems detected in the Canaries Approach ACC and that are designed to optimize air traffic procedures.

The draft report is in an advanced phase.