

## **Southwest Airlines Flight 1871**

**July 27, 2012**

**N379SW B737-3H4**

**KLAS-KELP**

### **Captain (Pilot Flying) Narrative:**

Approximately 15 nm southwest of El Paso's runway 8R, we lowered the landing gear. Airspeed was approximately 215 knots and G loadings were minimal. A very loud bang was heard from the nose wheel compartment as soon as the landing gear was lowered. The noise was so loud that I questioned the structural integrity of the nose landing gear. We continued to configure for a normal landing and proceeded to runway 8R and asked tower if they could inspect the nose gear from the control tower. They noticed no damage or anything else abnormal, but just to be sure there were no abnormalities we performed a normal go-around but left the landing gear down. The aircraft was flown to a right downwind and we set up for a normal flaps 30 visual approach to runway 8R. The before landing checklist was completed and there were no abnormal indications in the cockpit, we had three down and locked indications. The landing was soft paying particular attention to the nose wheel touch down rate since I still didn't have full confidence in the structure of the nose gear. The nose wheel contacted the runway surface very gently and light braking was applied. We taxied the aircraft to the gate, and nose wheel steering operated normally. Upon the post flight inspection we noticed a large puddle of hydraulic fluid under the nose wheel well. With that I went back into the cockpit and it was then I noticed the A hydraulic system quantity bled down to 25%. With those indications in front of me I wrote up the discrepancy as a hydraulic "A" system leak. I assumed it was associated with lowering the landing gear. The first officer did a great job in coordination/Pilot Monitoring duties and checking the systems for any abnormalities.

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**First Officer (Pilot Monitoring) Narrative:**

Cleared for the visual 8r in ELP, Captain called for the gear down, I placed the handle in the down position, and we heard a loud bang in the nosewheel compartment. After a slight delay we got the 3 down and locked light indicators. There were no abnormal lights or indications in the cockpit. We configured for a normal landing and had the tower visually inspect the gear. The tower informed us that everything appeared to be normal. We did a normal right traffic pattern to 8R. The Captain landed and kept all of the pressure off the nose and used minimal braking. The landing rollout was uneventful. Upon taxi in I notified ELP Ops that we were going to need maintenance. Upon inspection at the gate, there was a large pool of hydraulic fluid under the nosewheel compartment and it was noted that the A system quantity had significantly reduced. We informed the crew taking over the aircraft about everything that happened. The Captain made a logbook write up and maintenance was notified.

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**A Flight Attendant Narrative:**

Flight attendants seated for landing. When landing gear began to drop there was a VERY loud creaking/forceful/bang sound. We did one go around before landing.

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**B Flight Attendant Narrative:**

Aircraft was on final to ELP. I was seated and bucked in jumpseat for landing. There was a loud pop when the landing gear was lowered. I am a private pilot and I knew that the sound was not normal. The aircraft then began a go around. I mentally prepared for a possible emergency. Aircraft landed safely and no emergency occurred.

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**C Flight Attendant Narrative:**

Flight Attendants in jumpseat buckled up when landing gear went down. There was a huge bang (pop) as this happened. We circled once before we landed.

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**Deadhead Flight Attendant Narrative:**

I was deadheading on flight #1871 on aircraft N379SW from LAS to ELP. I sat just behind the wings on FO side. Upon our descent to land, as the nose gear was lowering, I heard a loud pop. We did a go around before landing. Captain informed pax of the situation: that because of the noise, he wanted ATC to check our gear during go around. We landed safely.