



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Atlanta, Georgia	Accident Number:	DCA19CA146
Date & Time:	April 4, 2019, 20:19 Local	Registration:	N977DL
Aircraft:	McDonnell Douglas MD88	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Ground collision	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 121: Air carrier - Scheduled		

Analysis

On April 4, 2019, at 2019 eastern daylight time, Delta Air Lines flight 1276, a Boeing/McDonnell Douglas MD88, N977DL, was substantially damaged after being struck by a baggage tug during taxi at the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, Atlanta, Georgia (ATL). There were no injuries aboard the airplane, the tug driver received minor injuries. Night visual conditions with light rain prevailed. The airplane was operating under 14 CFR Part 121 as a regularly scheduled domestic passenger flight from Syracuse Hancock International Airport (SYR), Syracuse, New York to ATL.

According to the operator, the flight crew reported that the flight from SYR. The captain reported that after landing, ATC cleared the flight to enter the Ramp 2 east taxi lane and taxi to gate B14. The captain indicated that as they began to turn right into the ramp, Ramp Control instructed flight 1276 to give way to opposite direction traffic. As the captain was looking forward to identify the traffic, the first officer called out, "Stop, Stop, Stop!" The captain immediately applied full brakes. The flight crew then heard and felt an impact coming from the right side of the forward fuselage.

The pilots notified ramp control and held position. Ground support personnel arrived quickly to assist. The ground personnel told the pilot via inter-phone that a tug and baggage cart had impacted the fuselage and was against the nose gear. Ground personnel reported to the crew that the tug driver was OK but that he did not know where he was or how he got there.

The crew and passengers deplaned via the ventral stairs with no further incident.

The tug driver did not cooperate with the investigation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of the tug driver to give way to the taxiing airplane.

Findings

Personnel issues	Incorrect action performance - Ground crew
-------------------------	--

Factual Information

History of Flight

Taxi	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)
Taxi	Ground collision (Defining event)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	55
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 11, 2018
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 18, 2018
Flight Time:	14470 hours (Total, all aircraft), 11088 hours (Total, this make and model), 9204 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 120 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Co-pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	36
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 6, 2019
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 23, 2019
Flight Time:	2207 hours (Total, all aircraft), 273 hours (Total, this make and model), 82 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	McDonnell Douglas	Registration:	N977DL
Model/Series:	MD88	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1991	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	53258
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	157
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 3, 2019	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	150500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Turbo fan
Airframe Total Time:	72944 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Pratt & Whitney
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	JT8D-219
Registered Owner:	Delta Air Lines Inc	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Delta Air Lines	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Flag carrier (121)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KATL	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	23:52 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	130°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.18 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	20°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Syracuse, NY (KSYR)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Atlanta, GA (KATL)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	18:03 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Hartsfield - Jackson Atlanta I KATL	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	1026 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	Unknown
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Unknown

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	33.64389,-84.436943

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): English, William

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: April 22, 2020

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note: This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=99376>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).