
Loss of elevator control, Douglas DC-9-14, March 21, 1999

Micro-summary: This Douglas DC-9-14 experienced loss of elevator control while in cruise flight.


Event Date: 1999-03-21 at 1945 CST


Investigative Body: National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), USA


Investigative Body's Web Site: <http://www.nts.gov/>

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		NTSB ID: CHI99IA115		Aircraft Registration Number: N600ME	
		Occurrence Date: 03/21/1999		Most Critical Injury: None	
		Occurrence Type: Incident		Investigated By: NTSB	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place GRAND RAPIDS		State MI	Zip Code 49501	Local Time 1945	Time Zone CST
Airport Proximity: Unknown		Distance From Landing Facility:		Direction From Airport:	
Aircraft Information Summary					
Aircraft Manufacturer McDonnell Douglas		Model/Series DC-9-14		Type of Aircraft Airplane	
Sightseeing Flight: No			Air Medical Transport Flight: No		
Narrative					
Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:					
<p>On March 21, 1999, at 1945 central standard time (cst), a McDonnell Douglas DC-9-14, N600ME, operated by Midwest Express Airlines (MWEA), Inc., experienced a loss of elevator control while in cruise flight over Grand Rapids, Michigan. The 14 CFR Part 121 flight departed Newark International Airport (EWR), Newark, New Jersey, en route to General Mitchell International Airport (MKE), Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The flight crew piloted the aircraft using the elevator trim system until regaining elevator control after descent. The airplane landed at General Mitchell International Airport without further incident. There were no reported injuries to the four-person crew or to the 60 passengers.</p>					
<p>Weather at the departure airport, approximately 19 minutes prior to departure, was reported as heavy rain showers and mist, and a temperature of 46 degrees (F). Upon arrival, at MKE, MWEA maintenance personnel inspected the aircraft and found ice accretions in the elevator control bay of the vertical stabilizer. Debris was also found covering the drainage holes within this bay. No other anomalies were detected with respect to the incident aircraft. No ice was found in any area that would have prevented movement of the elevator.</p>					
<p>On April 9, 1999, approximately 0745 cst, the same airplane, N600ME, experienced a similar occurrence while in cruise flight. The aircraft had departed MKE en route to EWR. The weather, at MKE, at the departure time, was reported as rain showers and mist, and a temperature of 39 degrees (F). After leveling off at 29,000 feet altitude, the pilots determined that the elevator control would not respond to control inputs. The captain stated, in a written report, that he "applied more and more elevator backpressure until I [he] finally felt [the] elevator control 'bump' free and control was restored." The flight continued to EWR with no further difficulties.</p>					
<p>After the April 9, 1999 occurrence, MWEA maintenance personnel inspected the aircraft and no anomalies were noted with respect to the elevator control difficulties.</p>					
FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION					
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 National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION		NTSB ID: CHI99IA115			
		Occurrence Date: 03/21/1999			
		Occurrence Type: Incident			
Landing Facility/Approach Information					
Airport Name	Airport ID:	Airport Elevation Ft. MSL	Runway Used 0	Runway Length	Runway Width
Runway Surface Type:					
Runway Surface Condition:					
Type Instrument Approach:					
VFR Approach/Landing:					
Aircraft Information					
Aircraft Manufacturer McDonnell Douglas		Model/Series DC-9-14		Serial Number 45725	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Transport					
Landing Gear Type: Retractable - Tricycle					
Homebuilt Aircraft? No	Number of Seats: 65	Certified Max Gross Wt.	91500 LBS	Number of Engines: 2	
Engine Type: Turbo Fan	Engine Manufacturer: P&W	Model/Series: JT8D-7B	Rated Power: 14000 LBS		
- Aircraft Inspection Information					
Type of Last Inspection Continuous Airworthiness	Date of Last Inspection 02/1999	Time Since Last Inspection 216 Hours	Airframe Total Time 6931 Hours		
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information					
ELT Installed?	ELT Operated?	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site?			
Owner/Operator Information					
Registered Aircraft Owner MIDWEST EXPRESS AIRLINES		Street Address 6744 SOUTH HOWELL AVENUE			
		City MILWAUKEE	State WI	Zip Code 53154	
Operator of Aircraft Same as Reg'd Aircraft Owner		Street Address Same as Reg'd Aircraft Owner			
		City	State	Zip Code	
Operator Does Business As:			Operator Designator Code: MWEA		
- Type of U.S. Certificate(s) Held:					
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s): Flag Carrier/Domestic					
Operating Certificate:			Operator Certificate:		
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 121: Air Carrier					
Type of Flight Operation Conducted: Scheduled; Domestic; Passenger Only					
FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION					

 <p>National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION</p>	NTSB ID: CHI99IA115
	Occurrence Date: 03/21/1999
	Occurrence Type: Incident

First Pilot Information

Name On File	City On File	State On File	Date of Birth On File	Age 43
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Sex: U	Seat Occupied: Left	Principal Profession: Civilian Pilot	Certificate Number: On File
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Certificate(s): Airline Transport

Airplane Rating(s): Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land

Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA: None

Instrument Rating(s): Airplane

Instructor Rating(s): None

Type Rating/Endorsement for Accident/Incident Aircraft? Yes	Current Biennial Flight Review?
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Medical Cert.: Class 1	Medical Cert. Status: Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Date of Last Medical Exam: 01/1999
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- Flight Time Matrix	All A/C	This Make and Model	Airplane Single Engine	Airplane Multi-Engine	Night	Instrument		Rotorcraft	Glider	Lighter Than Air
						Actual	Simulated			
Total Time	18297	6747	2712	15585	2503	895	93			
Pilot In Command(PIC)	10686	980	2583	8103	1750	565	3			
Instructor										
Last 90 Days	244	244		244	48	20				
Last 30 Days	96	96		96	18	7				
Last 24 Hours	6	6		6		1				

Seatbelt Used? Yes	Shoulder Harness Used? Yes	Toxicology Performed? No	Second Pilot? Yes
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Flight Plan/Itinerary

Type of Flight Plan Filed: IFR

Departure Point NEWARK	State NJ	Airport Identifier EWR	Departure Time 2010	Time Zone EST
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Destination MILWAUKEE	State WI	Airport Identifier MKE	
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Type of Clearance: IFR

Type of Airspace: Class A

Weather Information

Source of Briefing: Company; Flight Service Station

Method of Briefing:

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Weather Information					
WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
EWR	1951	EST	18 Ft. MSL	0 NM	0 Deg. Mag.
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Unknown			0 Ft. AGL	Condition of Light: Night/Dark	
Lowest Ceiling: Broken		800 Ft. AGL		Visibility: 3 SM	Altimeter: 30.00 "Hg
Temperature: 5 °C	Dew Point: 7 °C	Wind Direction: 140		Density Altitude: Ft.	
Wind Speed: 19	Gusts: 25	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Instrument Conditions			
Visibility (RVR): 0 Ft.	Visibility (RVV) 0 SM	Intensity of Precipitation: Heavy			
Restrictions to Visibility: None					
Type of Precipitation: Rain					

Accident Information		
Aircraft Damage: None	Aircraft Fire: None	Aircraft Explosion: None

Classification: U.S. Registered/U.S. Soil					
- Injury Summary Matrix	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	TOTAL
First Pilot				1	1
Second Pilot				1	1
Student Pilot					
Flight Instructor					
Check Pilot					
Flight Engineer					
Cabin Attendants				2	2
Other Crew					
Passengers				60	60
- TOTAL ABOARD -				64	64
Other Ground	0	0	0		0
- GRAND TOTAL -	0	0	0	64	64

National Transportation Safety Board

FACTUAL REPORT

AVIATION



NTSB ID: CHI99IA115

Occurrence Date: 03/21/1999

Occurrence Type: Incident

Administrative Information

Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)

JOHN M. BRANNEN

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