
Accidental landing on taxiway, Douglas DC-9-82, March 14, 2003

Micro-summary: This Douglas DC-9-82 crew misidentified a taxiway as the active runway and landed on it.

Event Date: 2003-03-14 at 1620 PST


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


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


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		NTSB ID: SEA03IA046		Aircraft Registration Number: N298AA	
		Occurrence Date: 03/14/2003		Most Critical Injury: None	
		Occurrence Type: Incident		Investigated By: NTSB	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place Seattle		State WA	Zip Code 98188	Local Time 1620	Time Zone PST
Airport Proximity: On Airport		Distance From Landing Facility:		Direction From Airport:	
Aircraft Information Summary					
Aircraft Manufacturer Boeing		Model/Series DC-9-82		Type of Aircraft Airplane	
Sightseeing Flight: No			Air Medical Transport Flight: No		
Narrative					
<p>Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:</p> <p>On March 14, 2003, at 1620 Pacific standard time, an American Airlines DC-9-82, N298AA, landed on Taxiway Charlie at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Seattle, Washington. There were no injuries to the flight crew, the cabin crew, or any of the 105 passengers. The aircraft, which is owned and operated by American Airlines, Inc., was not damaged. All occupants exited the aircraft at the passenger terminal using normal means. The 14 CFR Part 121 scheduled domestic passenger flight, which departed Dallas-Fort Worth Airport at 1435 central standard time, was being operated in visual meteorological conditions at the time of the incident.</p> <p>At the time the aircraft arrived in the area adjacent to Mount Rainer, the Bay Visual Approach was in effect, and according to American Airlines, during his pre-landing flight crew briefing, the Captain stated that he intended to execute the visual approach backed up by the ILS to Runway 16 Right. Because there was a ceiling over the final approach course, while the flight was tracking to the north on the east side of the airport, they were advised by the approach controller to expect the ILS to Runway 16 Right. The flight was then vectored to a 15 mile final and cleared for the ILS approach. About four to five miles from the end of the runway, at about 3,500 feet above the ground (AGL), the flight crew passed through the cloud deck, made visual contact with the runway environment, and transitioned to visual navigation. According to the information collected from the flight data recorder immediately after the event, the aircraft started a constant-rate deviation to the right of the localize approximately the same time as the aircraft passed 3,500 feet AGL. This deviation was the result of the flight crew maintaining a heading between 153 degrees and 156 degrees magnetic, which was taking them directly to the "approach end" of Taxiway Charlie. Neither the Captain nor the First Officer were aware they were lined up on the taxiway, and they did not know they had landed on the taxiway until advised by the tower. A rain shower had recently moved through the area, and although there was an overcast over the center and north end of the airport, south of the field rays of sunlight were shining through holes in the clouds, resulting in a glare from the wet paved surfaces.</p> <p>During the investigation it was determined that during the four years prior to this event, there had been one other reported landing on Taxiway Charlie, and two reported instances where flight crews had lined up on the taxiway, but on short final had either executed a go-around or sidestepped to Runway 16 right. In May of 2000, the airport installed an "X" (about 12 feet across) about 150 feet off the north end of Taxiway Charlie, but the subject crew did not detect it on this approach. It was also noted that since January of 2001, there has been an entry in the United States Government Airport Facility Directory stating, "Do not mistake Txy C for a landing surface."</p>					
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 National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION		NTSB ID: SEA03IA046			
		Occurrence Date: 03/14/2003			
		Occurrence Type: Incident			
Landing Facility/Approach Information					
Airport Name	Airport ID:	Airport Elevation	Runway Used	Runway Length	Runway Width
Seattle-Tacoma International	SEA	429 Ft. MSL	T/W	9425	180
Runway Surface Type: Concrete					
Runway Surface Condition: Wet					
Type Instrument Approach: ILS-complete; Visual					
VFR Approach/Landing: Full Stop					
Aircraft Information					
Aircraft Manufacturer		Model/Series		Serial Number	
Boeing		DC-9-82		49310	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Transport					
Landing Gear Type: Retractable - Tricycle					
Homebuilt Aircraft? No	Number of Seats: 136	Certified Max Gross Wt.	150500 LBS	Number of Engines: 2	
Engine Type:	Engine Manufacturer:	Model/Series:	Rated Power:		
Turbo Fan	Pratt & Whitney	JT8D-217C	20850 LBS		
- Aircraft Inspection Information					
Type of Last Inspection	Date of Last Inspection	Time Since Last Inspection	Airframe Total Time		
Continuous Airworthiness	03/2003	27 Hours	51944 Hours		
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information					
ELT Installed? No	ELT Operated?	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site?			
Owner/Operator Information					
Registered Aircraft Owner		Street Address			
American Airlines		4333 Amon Carter Blvd.			
		City	State	Zip Code	
		Fort Worth	TX	75261	
Operator of Aircraft		Street Address			
Same as Reg'd Aircraft Owner		Same as Reg'd Aircraft Owner			
		City	State	Zip Code	
Operator Does Business As:			Operator Designator Code: AAL		
- 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					

 <p>National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION</p>	NTSB ID: SEA03IA046
	Occurrence Date: 03/14/2003
	Occurrence Type: Incident

First Pilot Information

Name On File	City On File	State On File	Date of Birth On File	Age 46
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Sex: M	Seat Occupied: Left	Principal Profession: Civilian Pilot	Certificate Number: On File
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Certificate(s): Airline Transport; Flight Engineer

Airplane Rating(s): Multi-engine Land

Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA:

Instrument Rating(s): Airplane

Instructor Rating(s): None

Type Rating/Endorsement for Accident/Incident Aircraft? Yes	Current Biennial Flight Review? 09/2001
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Medical Cert.: Class 1	Medical Cert. Status: None	Date of Last Medical Exam: 02/2003
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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		3372								
Pilot In Command(PIC)										
Instructor										
Last 90 Days										
Last 30 Days										
Last 24 Hours										

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 Dallas-Ft Worth	State TX	Airport Identifier DFW	Departure Time 1435	Time Zone CST
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Destination Same as Accident/Incident Location	State	Airport Identifier SEA	
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Type of Clearance: IFR

Type of Airspace: Class D

Weather Information

Source of Briefing: Company

Method of Briefing: Telephone

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Weather Information					
WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
KSEA	1556		Ft. MSL	NM	Deg. Mag.
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Scattered			3000 Ft. AGL	Condition of Light: Day	
Lowest Ceiling: Broken		6000 Ft. AGL		Visibility: 10 SM	Altimeter: 29.52 "Hg
Temperature: 12 °C	Dew Point: 7 °C	Wind Direction: 180		Density Altitude: Ft.	
Wind Speed: 4	Gusts:	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Conditions			
Visibility (RVR): Ft.	Visibility (RVV) SM	Intensity of Precipitation:			
Restrictions to Visibility: None					
Type of Precipitation: None					

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				4	4
Other Crew					
Passengers				105	105
- TOTAL ABOARD -				111	111
Other Ground					
- GRAND TOTAL -				111	111

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National Transportation Safety Board

FACTUAL REPORT

AVIATION



NTSB ID: SEA03IA046

Occurrence Date: 03/14/2003

Occurrence Type: Incident

Administrative Information

Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)

Orrin K. Anderson

Additional Persons Participating in This Accident/Incident Investigation:

Eugene Beauchemin

Seattle CMO