

## **Testimony to an A300B4 and his crew**

To those of you who are wondering what happened to the DHL A300B4 coming out of Baghdad last Saturday, take a look. Aircraft was hit at 8000 FT, lost ALL hydraulics and therefore had no flight controls, actually did a missed approach using only engine thrust and eventually (after about 16mins) landed heavily on runway 33L at Baghdad. This was fortunate because with no steering the aircraft veered off the runway to the left, had they landed on 33R veering to the left would have taken them straight into the fire station.





The aircraft then travelled about 600 metres through soft sand taking out a razor wire fence in the process, see LH engine pic, and came to rest almost at the bottom of the sloping area between the runway and a taxiway.

All three crew evacuated safely down the second slide, the first one tore on the razor wire.









I flew in with a team on Tuesday in one of our Metros and some special equipment we'd had made locally in Bahrain and some provided by Airbus. Using a USAF D9 Caterpillar pulling a 100 metre cable fitted to the back end of each bogie and a nice new aircraft pushback tug with a towbar on the nose gear, we were able to remove the aircraft just on dusk on Tuesday night and towed it to an Iraqi Airways graveyard on one side of the terminal. We stayed overnight in the USAF camp on the airport and went back to the aircraft on Wednesday morning to allow the insurance survey to be completed and then secure the aircraft. Basically, LH engine rotates in a fashion, has ingested lots of razor wire and is knackered. RH engine has seized, probably from ingesting loads of sand at maximum reverse thrust and inlet cowl has unacceptable lip damage, probably from hitting the razor wire fence posts.



The No 8 axle appears to be cracked as the wheel sits at an odd angle. The bulk of the damage is the LH wing. About 3 metres of rear spar is missing in front of the outboard flap, the wing has bulged upwards and downwards where the initial explosion appears to have occurred, one O/B flap track is hanging in the breeze and one has a small piece of flap still attached, the rest of the flap is nonexistent. The pics show the huge crack that has occurred to the rear spar inboard of where the spar has burnt away, possibly from loads on the wing during the landing process.













The front spar appears to be intact. The point of entry pics show where a projectile entered Tank 1A, which was full of fuel, and, after it ignited, proceeded to burn away at the spar.

The fuel tank ribs in the area directly in front of the O/B flap are burnt almost 50% through.

























The crew obviously did a fantastic job in getting the aircraft back on to the ground and one can only assume that it was most fortunate that they were not aware of the state of the wing as they could not see it from the cockpit. It also says a lot for the structure of the aircraft that it withstood the impact of the (whatever is finally determined to have hit it).

I'm sure there will be lots of other photos and videos flying around the net, but at least these ones are genuine. The worst part for us was the airport was shut down on Wednesday and we had to be driven in an armour-plated Landcruiser Troop Carrier from Baghdad to Balad, 60miles to the north, from where we flew back to Bahrain in our Metro again.

I trust you will all appreciate just how lucky these guys were.

DHL International Aviation,  
Bahrain.