

National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594

Brief of Incident

Adopted 11/07/2012

OPS12IA167B						
File No. 30492	12/01/2011	Chicago, IL	Aircraft Reg No. N432WN	Time (Local): 09:07 CDT		
Make/Model:	Boeing / 737-7H4			Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Engine Make/Model:	Cfm Intl. / CFM56 SERIES		Crew	0	0	5
Aircraft Damage:	None		Pass	0	0	74
Number of Engines:	2					
Operating Certificate(s):	Flag Carrier/Domestic					
Name of Carrier:	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO					
Type of Flight Operation:	Scheduled; Domestic; Passenger Only					
Reg. Flight Conducted Under:	Part 121: Air Carrier					
Last Depart. Point:	Minneapolis-St, MN			Condition of Light:	Day	
Destination:	Same as Accident/Incident Location			Weather Info Src:	Weather Observation Facility	
Airport Proximity:	On Airport/Airstrip			Basic Weather:	Visual Conditions	
Airport Name:	Chicago Midway			Lowest Ceiling:	20000 Ft. AGL, Broken	
Runway Identification:	31C			Visibility:	10.00 SM	
Runway Length/Width (Ft):	6522 / 150			Wind Dir/Speed:	180 / 004 Kts	
Runway Surface:	Unknown			Temperature (°C):	1	
Runway Surface Condition:	Dry			Precip/Obscuration:		
Pilot-in-Command Age:				Flight Time (Hours)		
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)				Total All Aircraft:	Unk/Nr	
				Last 90 Days:	Unk/Nr	
				Total Make/Model:	Unk/Nr	
Instrument Ratings				Total Instrument Time:	Unk/Nr	

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At 0907 on December 1, 2011, a runway incursion and operational error occurred at MDW when Southwest Airlines flight 844 (SWA844), a Boeing 737-700, was cleared to cross runway 31R immediately after Gama Charters flight 17 (GAJ17), a Learjet 45, was cleared for takeoff on the same runway. After landing on runway 31C, the crew of SWA844 was instructed to cross runway 31R and contact ground control. GAJ17 was departing from runway 31R at the time, and conflicted with SWA844 as the B737 crossed the hold-short line for runway 31R at taxiway N. The first officer of SWA844 saw the Learjet departing runway 31R and warned the captain, who was at the controls, to stop. The captain stopped the B737 short of the runway edge. Air traffic control did not take any actions to resolve the conflict between the two aircraft. After the incident, the captain of SWA844 said that the departing Learjet had overflown his aircraft. Recorded FAA data indicated that the closest proximity as the Learjet passed the B737 was 287 feet laterally and 62 feet vertically. Although MDW is equipped with an Airport Surface Detection Equipment – X (ASDE-X) ground movement safety system that included conflict detection and warning capability, the system did not sound an alarm during the incident.

The 0851 weather observation for MDW was wind 180 degrees at 4 knots, visibility 10 statute miles, few clouds at 15,000 feet above ground level (AGL), broken clouds at 20,000 feet AGL, broken clouds at 25,000 feet AGL, temperature 1 degree Celsius, dew point minus 4 degrees Celsius, altimeter 30.26 inches of mercury.

For further information, see the Air Traffic Control Group Chairman's Factual Report included in the docket for this incident.

*** Note: NTSB investigators used data provided by various sources and may have traveled in support of this investigation to prepare this aircraft incident report. ***

A runway incursion occurred when a Boeing 737-700 (B737) was cleared by a tower local controller to cross a runway immediately after a Learjet 45 was cleared for takeoff on the same runway. The first officer of the B737 saw the departing Learjet and warned the captain, who stopped the B737 short of the runway edge. Air traffic control personnel did not take any actions to resolve the conflict between the two airplanes. Recorded data indicated that the Learjet passed within 287 feet laterally and 62 feet vertically of the B737. Updated at Nov 7 2012 9:45AM

Taxi - Runway incursion veh/AC/person

FINDINGS

Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Identification/recognition-ATC personnel - C
Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Decision making/judgment-ATC personnel - C
Personnel issues-Task performance-Communication (personnel)-Lack of communication-ATC personnel - C

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

PROBABLE CAUSE(S)

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this incident to be:

The tower local controller did not ensure that the runway was clear of conflict before directing the B737 to cross the runway, and other air traffic control personnel did not effectively intervene when the separation between the two airplanes became questionable

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Brief of Incident (Continued)

OCCURRENCES

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