



British Airways Plane Catches Fire on Las Vegas Runway

British Airways plane catches fire in Las Vegas before taking off for London

By KIMBERLY PIERCEALL

The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS

An engine on a London-bound [British Airways](#) jet caught fire Tuesday while the plane was preparing to take off from Las Vegas, shooting flames from the side of the jet and forcing passengers to escape on emergency slides.

Billowing black smoke and orange flames could be seen pouring from under the plane's wings, sending passengers fleeing quickly from the aircraft and across the tarmac before about 50 firefighters doused the aircraft in minutes.

British Airways said late Tuesday that 157 passengers, not 159 according to earlier reports, were on board Flight 2276 in addition to 10 crew members and three pilots when the engine caught fire.

All were able to get off the plane, McCarran International Airport spokesman Chris Jones said.

Fire officials said 14 people were taken to Sunrise Hospital by early Tuesday evening for minor injuries, most a result of sliding down the inflatable chutes to escape.

The [Federal Aviation Administration](#) delayed flights to Las Vegas from some airports for more than two hours after the fire to slow the flow of planes while the disabled Boeing 777 made two of the airport's four runways inaccessible. One of the runways reopened about 2 1/2 hours after the fire.

Reggie Bugmuncher, of Philadelphia, said she was charging her phone and waiting at a gate for her flight when she heard people saying, "Oh, my God." She looked out the window and could see "bursts of flames coming out of the middle of the plane."

"Everyone ran to the windows and people were standing on their chairs, looking out, holding their breath with their hands over their mouths," Bugmuncher said.

The plane's emergency slides were deployed a few moments later and passengers quickly got off the plane. She said it was a "bit more orderly" than she would have expected given the dramatic nature of the fire and smoke.

Firefighters stationed at the airport reached the plane two minutes after getting reports of flames, and within another three minutes, everyone inside the plane had escaped.

After firefighters extinguished the flames, emergency vehicles could be seen surrounding the aircraft, which was left a sooty gray from the smoke and fire retardant.

Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Ian Gregor said the left engine of the twin-engine plane caught fire. The [National Transportation Safety Board](#) was collecting information about the incident, said Eric Weiss, a spokesman for the agency in Washington.

Clark County Deputy Fire Chief Jon Klassen said the cause of the fire wasn't clear yet, but the fire didn't appear to breach the cabin.

The Boeing 777-200, popular with airlines for its fuel efficiency for long-haul flights, was bound for Gatwick Airport near London.

In its 21-year history, the 777-200 has been involved in three fatal incidents: one in July 2013 that killed three passengers when an Asiana Airlines flight landed short of San Francisco International Airport's runway; Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 that disappeared last year, and a piece of its debris was recently recovered on an Indian Ocean island; and Flight MH17 that was shot down over Ukraine.

British Airways spokeswoman Caroline Titmuss didn't answer questions about Tuesday's fire in an email exchange but said "safety is always our priority."

Titmuss said in an email that the airline was "looking after customers" but didn't elaborate. She said the airline would release more information later.

Las Vegas' airport is the ninth-busiest in the U.S. and had nearly 43 million passengers last year. The airport has been taking steps to accommodate more international travelers seeking direct flights to Europe and Asia, including adding new gates to accommodate wide-body double-decker jets.

Associated Press writer Anna Johnson in Phoenix contributed to this report.

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A British Airways Boeing 777 has caught fire while preparing for takeoff from Las Vegas

BY: NETWORK WRITERS

FROM: NEWS CORP AUSTRALIA NETWORK

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Burning ... Flight 2276 on the runway. Source: Twitter Source: Supplied

AN engine on a British Airways jet caught fire while the plane was preparing to take off from Las Vegas, forcing passengers to escape on emergency slides.

All passengers and crew evacuated safely as the Boeing 777-200 erupted in a cloud of smoke.

The fire, at [McCarran International Airport](#), started as British Airways Flight 2276 moved out on the tarmac in preparation for a flight to London.





The London-bound British Airways flight BA2276 catch fire on the runway of McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas, Nevada. Picture: Twitter / kavittivak
Source: Twitter

There were 159 passengers and 13 crew on board the flight bound for Gatwick International Airport.

Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Ian Gregor said the plane's left engine caught fire. Billowing black smoke and orange flames could be seen pouring from the plane's wings before about 50 firefighters quickly doused the aircraft.



A passenger plane on fire ... on the runway at McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas. Picture: AFP Source: AFP

Two people have been transported to hospital with what are reported as minor injuries.

He said it was unclear why the 275-seat Boeing 777 jet bound for London's Gatwick Airport caught fire.

Boeing in a statement said: "We're aware of the incident at McCarran Airport in Las Vegas. Our teams are currently gathering more information."

Passengers described scenes of panic on the plane with one witness telling CNN "we heard a lot of screaming".



Dramatic incident ... the plane that caught fire, where passengers had to exit via the emergency slide. Picture: AP Source: AP

Some of the passengers posted videos and pictures that showed plumes of smoke and flames engulfing the aircraft.

“Just got evacuated from our flight#BA2276 plane caught fire somehow omg,” passenger Dominic Worthington on Twitter.

Paul Berberian, a passenger aboard another plane that was on the tarmac at the time of the incident, described watching in disbelief as the British Airways plane caught fire.



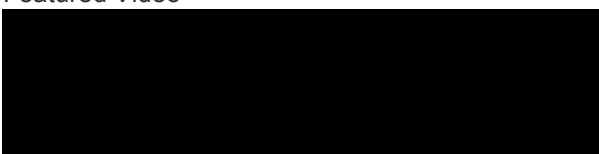
“We were all glued to the side of the plane watching this unfold,” he said of fellow passengers on his flight.

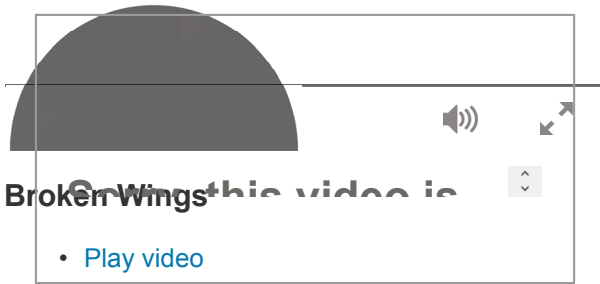
McCarran Airport said air traffic had resumed normally apart from the runway where the British Airways plane was still parked by late afternoon.



Crisis averted ... Casinos along the Las Vegas Strip can be seen behind the plane that caught fire. Picture: AP Source: AP

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