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**AIR ACCIDENT
INVESTIGATION UNIT**

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PRELIMINARY INCIDENT REPORT

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this Report will be corrected when the Final Report has been completed.

1. AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURER:	McDonnell Douglas Corporation	
Model:	DC 9-83 (MD-83)	
State of Registry:	United Kingdom	
Registration:	G-FLTM	
Serial Number:	53052	
Year of Manufacture:	1990	
2. OPERATOR:	Flightline Ltd	
3. TYPE OF OPERATION:	Commercial (passenger charter)	
4. DATE / TIME:	16 August 2007 @ 23.34 hrs	
5. POSITION OF OCCURRENCE:	On approach to Dublin Airport	
6. PERSONS ON BOARD:	Crew: 5	Passengers: 112
7. INJURIES:	Crew: Nil	Passengers: Nil
8. DAMAGE:	None	
9. INVESTIGATOR-IN-CHARGE:	Leo Murray	

Late on 16 August 2007 a Serious Incident occurred to McDonnell Douglas MD-83, registration G-FLTM, while on approach to Dublin Airport. The aircraft had earlier departed Lisbon as flight FLT344E with the co-pilot acting as Pilot Flying (PF). As a result of maintenance on the main runway (RWY 10/28) at Dublin Airport, RWY 34 was the active runway. Weather conditions were good at the time of the incident.

At approximately 5 Nautical Miles (NM) from touchdown on RWY 34 the aircraft began to deviate left of the approach course. The aircraft continued to descend below the MDA (Minimum Descent Altitude) without proper visual identification of the runway in use.

On the instruction of Air Traffic Control (ATC) the aircraft turned right and climbed to a safe altitude. The aircraft was given radar vectors by ATC to an approach on RWY 16 and landed without further incident.

Subsequently, the AAIU conducted a series of approaches on RWY 34 to identify the reason for the deviation of G-FLTM from the correct approach course. It was found that lighting from a 16-storey building situated at Santry Cross (**Photo No. 1**) appeared, at night, to resemble the red and white lights of a runway approach light system (**Photo No. 2**). The building is equipped with four fixed red obstacle lights situated on the roof.

On the 4 September 2007, the Chief Inspector of Air Accidents and the Investigator-in-Charge formally briefed the Director, Safety Regulation of the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) on the AAIU's preliminary findings of this investigation. Following this briefing, the IAA immediately issued an Air Traffic Services (ATS) Operations Notice in response to concerns identified by the AAIU.

The investigation is ongoing, but the AAIU makes the following two Interim Safety Recommendations:

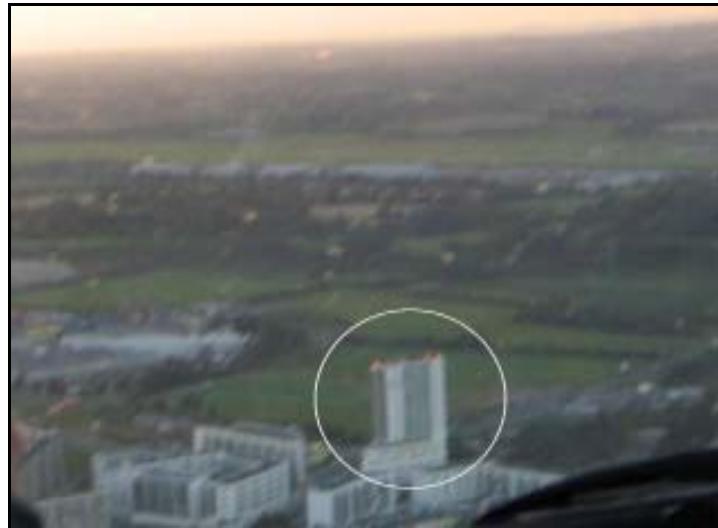
1. The IAA should promulgate to pilots and operators, the possibility of confusing the obstacle at Santry Cross with the approach lighting of RWY 34. [\(SR 16 of 2007\)](#)

IAA Response:

On the 4 September 2007, the IAA issued ATS Operations Notice 043/07 for Dublin Airport. This notice requires that when RWY 34 is in use all ATIS broadcasts will include the following phraseology.. "Caution – Lights on a building 1.5 nm south west of the threshold of RWY 34 have the potential to disorientate flight crews".

2. The IAA review the suitability of obstacle lighting as installed on the 52 metre-high building situated at Santry Cross, Dublin. [\(SR 17 of 2007\)](#)

Photo No. 1



Building at Santry Cross under daylight (evening) conditions

Photo No. 2



Building at Santry Cross under night conditions

- END -