

Spanish Authorities Come to Initial Conclusions About the August 2008 Crash of a Spanair MD82

Date: 09-23-2008 07:10 PM CET

Category: [Tourism, Cars, Traffic](#)

Press release from: [AirSafe.com](#)

Sep 22, 2008 – According to a number of media reports, Spanish Authorities have completed a preliminary report about the August 20, 2008 crash of a Spanair MD82 in Madrid. Among their findings were that the flaps were not properly configured for takeoff and that there was no flap warnings or alarms presented to the crew.

The aircraft crashed shortly after takeoff on a scheduled domestic flight from Madrid to Las Palmas in the Canary Islands. The aircraft was briefly airborne, and crashed just to the right of the departure runway. The aircraft broke up and there was a severe post-crash fire. 154 of the 172 occupants were killed.

The accident occurred during the second takeoff attempt. The crew had returned to the gate after the first takeoff attempt due to problems that so far appear to be unrelated to the subsequent accident. During the second takeoff attempt, the crew reported reaching V1, or takeoff decision speed. The aircraft was airborne for about 15 seconds, reaching a maximum altitude of about 40 feet.

A video taken by the Spanish airport authority showed that after touching down, the aircraft slid for a considerable distance and appeared to be relatively intact before breaking up and exploding. Contrary to early reports from the day of the accident, an analysis of the video by the aviation safety organization AirSafe.com did not show any sign of a fire or explosion while the aircraft was airborne.

Among the key early findings of the investigation was that the aircraft's flaps were not properly deployed at takeoff. Also, there was no indication that the flap configuration alarm was activated. This sequence of events was similar to that of a 1987 MD82 crash in Detroit, Michigan.

After that accident, the manufacturer recommended that the flaps and associated warning systems be checked prior to each flight. Spanair procedures called for a check of the flaps and warning systems prior to the first flight of the day and after each change of flight crews during the day. There was no pre-takeoff check of the flap warning system prior to the accident flight.

For additional information on this crash, including additional safety information about the MD80 series aircraft and updates on the Spanair investigation, visit spanair.airsafe.org.

About AirSafe.com:

AirSafe.com is a comprehensive resource for understanding aviation safety and security issues and created to provide both the traveling public and aviation safety and security professionals with both objective and timely information on aviation safety and security, especially events involving airline passenger fatalities. Since 1996, AirSafe.com has been an innovator in making critical risk assessment and risk management information to the public, enabling both airline passengers and aviation professionals to make accurate judgments about the risks of flying. Whether it is through its web sites, audio podcasts, online discussions, or published research, AirSafe.com continues to be at the forefront of getting useful aviation safety and security information to the aerospace industry and to the general public.

Press Contact:

Dr. Todd Curtis

Director

AirSafe.com, LLC

24 Roy St., #302

Seattle, WA 98109

USA
Phone +1 206.300.8727
tcurtis@airsafe.com

[You can find this press release here](#)