

SYNOPSIS

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft	Bombardier CRJ700 registration F-GRZN
Date and time	12 July 2010 at around 18:30 UTC ¹
Operator:	Brit air
Place	Bilbao Airport (Spain)
Type of flight	Scheduled public transport of passengers
Persons on board	2 flight crew, 2 cabin crew, 63 passengers, 2 babies
Consequences and damage	None

The crew was performing the first leg of its round trip, departing from Bilbao, bound for Paris Charles de Gaulle. During the climb, the crew noticed that the aircraft autopilot was unable to hold the engaged vertical mode. The caution message “AP PITCH TRIM” appeared. The crew ran the relevant checklist which, after another unsuccessful attempt at engaging the AP, led them to resume manual control. They then decided to make several attempts at AP vertical mode engagement, which confirmed that the autopilot did not hold any of these modes. The flight continued on to its destination without any event of note.

At the stopover, the maintenance crew took a variety of steps relating to the problem encountered. No malfunctions were found. Specifically, they conducted three operational tests of the elevator servo control and checked the free clearance of the controls. The Certificate of Release to Service (CRS) was signed and the flight crew decided to fly the next leg, bound for Bilbao.

During this leg, the same problem occurred. The AP could not hold the vertical modes and the caution message “AP PITCH TERM” appeared. The flight continued under manual control.

During the flare at Bilbao, the crew had to exert greater effort than usual in order to flare. Touchdown, however, was normal. While taxiing, they noticed that the elevator control locked at half nose-up. The following flight was cancelled.

The maintenance performed after this incident revealed that the AP nose-up elevator control cable was broken and that the loose part of the cable had formed a loop, thereby jamming the AP servo.

¹ Except where otherwise stated, the times shown in this report are expressed in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC).