

Abstract

Aircraft has always been a safe mode of transport compare to any other mode available. But disasters sometimes do happen and often it comes with great prices and change modern flying forever. One of such incident is British airways Flight 5390. On June 10, 1990, on a routine flight from Birmingham to Malaga, the windscreen in the cockpit came off at 17400 feet altitude. At the time of the incident, there was 81 passengers four cabin crew and two flight attendants on board. As the windscreen came off, a massive decompression took place, and in the event, the pilot was sucked out of the cockpit with upper body out of the aircraft and only leg inside the cockpit snagging onto flight controls. For over 20 minutes, the co-pilot struggle for an emergency landing procedure, while pilot's body remained outside experiencing 345 mph wind at -17 degree temperature with air containing much less oxygen for normal body mechanism. Finally the plane managed to land safely and to everyone's surprise, the pilot was found to be alive. After 5 months staying in hospital, pilot started working again.

An investigation was carried out immediately to find out how a modern jetliner could possibly suffer such catastrophe up in the air. The result not only shocks the world but raises question on the safety of flight. It was found that, 27 hours before the flight, the windscreen was replaced with a new one. However, out of 90 bolts used to fix the windscreen with the cockpit, 84 of them were 0.66 mm smaller in diameter. Due to this tiny difference, the window couldn't hold the pressure and failed. Few millimetre played vital role between life and death. Several safety recommendations was carried out to make sure such incident never repeats in the near future ever again.