



State Commission on Aircraft Accidents Investigation

INCIDENT 2022/7037

RESOLUTION

of 26th May 2023

Type and model of aircraft:	Airplane, Airbus A321
Registration marks:	HA-LVO
Date of occurrence:	11 th December 2022
Place of occurrence:	EPWA, Poland

After reviewing the final report on the investigation and the collected documentation presented by the investigating entity, pursuant to Article 138 of The Act of 3rd July 2002 – Aviation Law (with later amendments) and § 16 of the Regulation of Minister of Transport of 18 January 2007 on air accidents and incidents, the State Commission on Aircraft Accidents Investigation determined that:

1. The course of the occurrence was as follows:

On December 11, 2022, an Airbus A321 airplane (hereinafter "Airbus") taxied TWY L to the threshold of RWY 29 for departure from EPWA Airport.

There were unfavorable weather conditions at EPWA Airport. The 11:30 a.m. METAR dispatch indicated visibility of 1,800 meters with a weak snowfall.

At 11:35:48 a.m., the TWR Controller (hereinafter "the Controller") allowed the crew of another airplane (hereinafter "airplane B") to cross RWY 29 from TWY A4. At 11:36:18, the Controller gave clearance to the crew of the Airbus airplane to occupy the threshold of RWY 29 and wait. The Controller waited until Airplane B cleared RWY 29 before issuing clearance to the Airbus airplane.

At that time, the Airport Duty Officer (hereinafter "Duty Officer"), who was in communication with the TWR Controller's Assistant (hereinafter "Assistant"), reported the need to cross RWY 29 from TWY A4. The Assistant knew that moments earlier, the Controller had cleared the crew of Airplane B to cross RWY 29 from the same TWY A4. On SMR display, the Assistant observed that Airplane B taxied across RWY 29. He also observed the Airbus airplane taxiing to the threshold of RWY 29, but later did not follow its movement due to increased traffic on the airfield caused by adverse weather conditions. The assistant did not notice that the Airbus airplane had taken RWY 29 and was preparing to depart. He stated that the visibility at the time of the

incident was 1,500 meters. The distance from the EPWA TWR to the Airbus airplane was approximately 1600 m.

The Assistant incorrectly assumed that the Controller's issuance of clearance for Airplane B to pass RWY 29 meant that there were no departures from RWY 29 shortly and that the Duty Officer would have time to pass RWY 29 behind Airplane B. The Assistant did not ask the Controller's permission for the Duty Officer to cross RWY 29, and this was required by regulations. At 11:36:35 a.m., the Assistant permitted the Duty Officer to cross RWY 29 behind Airplane B.

Airplane B crossed RWY 29 and moved away from it to a safe distance. The Controller, unaware of the Assistant's permission to cut RWY 29 by the Duty Vehicle, at 11:36:45 a.m., issued a takeoff clearance for the Airbus airplane. At the time of issuing the takeoff clearance, the Duty Officer was still on TWY A4 before the intersection with RWY 29, and the Airbus airplane was already taxiing along RWY 29 to the takeoff position.

The Assistant heard the Controller giving clearance for the Airbus airplane to take off and informed him that he had already given clearance for the Duty Officer's vehicle to cross RWY 29. At that time, the Duty Vehicle had already entered the intersection of TWY A4 and RWY 29, and the Airbus airplane had taken up takeoff positions on RWY 29 (Figure 1).

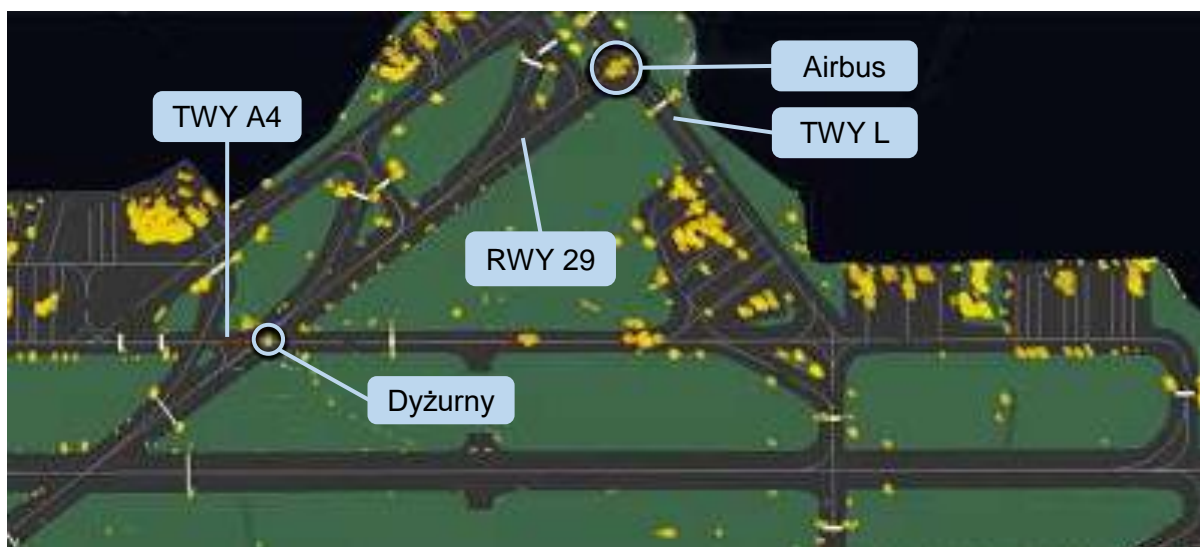


Figure 1: SMR radar display at the time when the Controller informed the crew of the Airbus airplane about the Duty Officer's vehicle crossing RWY 29 [source: PANSAs].

The controller did not cancel the Airbus airplane's clearance for takeoff but only informed the crew of a vehicle crossing RWY 29 at the height of TWY A4. The crew of the Airbus airplane began takeoff after the Duty Officer's vehicle left RWY 29.

2. Causes of the occurrence:

Issue of runway crossing clearance to a vehicle without coordination with the TWR controller.

3. Contributing factors:

- 1) Incorrect assumption by the TWR controller's assistant that there will be no takeoffs from RWY 29 in the short term.
- 2) Issuance of a takeoff clearance for the Airbus airplane in the absence of knowledge of a previously issued clearance for a vehicle to occupy the runway.
- 3) Visibility was limited to 1,500 m in light snowfall.
- 4) Increased traffic on the airfield due to unfavorable weather conditions.

4. The Commission accepted the following preventive measures proposed by the operator:

Not formulated.

5. In addition, the Commission has proposed the following safety recommendations:

Not formulated.

Investigator-in-Charge

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(signature on original)

PKBWL Chairman

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(signature on original)