

Beat: Travel

Pilot Suffers Eye Injury From Laser

On Approach to Orlando Airport

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USPA NEWS - Westjet pilot suffered an eye injury from a laser light while on approach to the Orlando Airport. The FAA reports the incident that took place on a flight from Newfoundland to Orlando.

FAA spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said in an email "...the WestJet Airlines aircraft was about 40 kilometres from the airport when the laser light hit the pilot. The flight landed safely a short time later, and the pilot was placed on medical leave, which is routine in such cases."

The airline released few details but spokesperson Morgan Bell said "Any pilot who reports being struck by a laser is required for safety and health reasons to have an ophthalmology evaluation.

Laser incidents pose a "serious concern" for crew and aircraft safety and are immediately reported to local authorities for investigation. Pilots are extremely focused during all phases of flight, but especially during take-off and landing, when most laser incidents occur. When any sort of light enters the flight deck, pilots are trained to look away and maintain focus but they must also remain vigilant with respect to their surroundings and monitor the apron prior to landing."

The incident is being investigated by the FAA and they have notified the Volusia County Sheriff's Office which assigned a Deputy to peruse the complaint.

Sources within the airline industry say that these type of incidents are difficult to investigate and prosecute. Transport Canada reports that in 2017 there were 379 cases of lasers being pointed at aircrafts within Canada. If convicted of such a crime perpetrator could face 5 years in prison, 100,000 in fines or both.

There are a number of airports throughout the world that have Airport Watch groups. The mandate of such groups is to report suspicious activity or safety issues around the perimeter of the airport while enjoying the hobby of plane spotting. Airports also encourage the general public to be vigilant and report potential issues.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-15451/pilot-suffers-eye-injury-from-laser.html>

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