



3 Oct 2001 Dubai International Airport operations back to normal; ATC action averts disaster

Traffic operations at Dubai International Airport reverted back to normal after a 13 hour closure. The runways which were closed at 8:15 pm last night after an Aeroflot flight AFL 521 crash-landed, reopened this morning at 9:24 am when EK 004 from London touched down. All flights diverted to neighbouring airports last night are now reverting back to Dubai.

As a follow up to the sequence of events which lead to an IL 86 Aeroflot flight AFL 521 to crash-land at Dubai International Airport at around 8:15 pm last night, credit goes to the Air Traffic Control for saving the day as the aircraft was coming in for a normal landing and no Emergency Call had been sounded by the captain of the aircraft.

An alert ATC officer at the control tower was the first to notice sparks flying out of the undercarriage of the aircraft as it landed and immediately informed the captain as well as the Fire Department. The fire personnel were at the runway within 70 seconds. The fire tenders were running alongside the aircraft as it came in rolling on its belly on the runway. The aircraft was immediately sprayed with foam averting a disaster and the emergency chutes were used to evacuate all passengers.

There were 307 passengers and 15 crew aboard when the incident happened. Only two passengers suffered some minor injuries while the rest escaped unharmed.

The reasons for the fire are being investigated by the General Civil Aviation Authority.