# British Airways flight runway fire caused by co-pilot’s thrust error at Gatwick



## British Airways Flight Aborted Following Pilot Error, Causing Fire and Airport Disruption

In a troubling incident at Gatwick Airport, a British Airways Boeing 777-200ER found itself engulfed in a perilous situation as it prepared for take-off to Vancouver. On 28 June 2024, just as the aircraft, flight BA2279, was set to depart, a mix-up involving the co-pilot's left and right hands led to a catastrophic error. The co-pilot inadvertently increased thrust instead of retracting it, igniting the brakes and forcing a high-speed emergency stop on the runway after the plane reached speeds exceeding 190 mph.

According to a report released by the Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB), the pilot's error, labelled an "action slip," came as he had recently returned from a period of annual leave and was reportedly well-rested. Despite his extensive experience, with over 6,000 flight hours, the co-pilot could not explain why he committed such a basic error, indicating a concerning gap in awareness during crucial moments of flight operation.

Fortunately, all 334 passengers and 13 crew members on board were unharmed during this alarming episode. However, the incident catalysed significant chaos at Gatwick, leading to the airport’s temporary closure and the cancellation of at least 23 flights. Video footage from the scene revealed passengers observing emergency services managing the situation as they awaited updates on the aborted take-off.

Fire crews promptly extinguished the flames that erupted from the overheated brakes, which were later described as "hot" by Gatwick officials. The airport’s spokesperson assured that safety remains the top priority and confirmed that normal operations resumed shortly after the emergency was managed. In total, the main runway was closed for approximately 38 minutes, causing ripple effects for numerous flights, as travel expert Simon Calder noted at least 12 flights were redirected due to the disruption.

This incident has prompted broader discussions about the implications for British Airways, particularly concerning the age and reliability of its fleet. Experts have suggested that stringent maintenance is essential to avoid similar failures in the future, especially given that the Boeing 777 model has been a staple of British Airways’ long-haul operations for many years.

Onlookers have noted the trend of aging aircraft fleets affecting operational integrity, highlighting the necessity for airlines to continually evaluate their technical standards and training protocols. The unforeseen incident at Gatwick underscores the critical importance of maintaining high safety standards in the aviation industry, particularly in an era where air travel demands an unwavering commitment to passenger safety amid operational efficiency challenges.

In the aftermath of the incident, a British Airways spokesperson reiterated the airline's dedication to safety and expressed regret over the inconveniences caused to its customers. As the airline industry examines this event further, it stands as a stark reminder of how crucial attention to detail is in aviation and the potential consequences when even seasoned professionals slip in their duties.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14692501/British-Airways-plane-caught-fire-pilot.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://aviationa2z.com/british-airways-777-rejected-takeoff-closed-gatwick-airport/), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/06/28/flights-diverted-delayed-boeing-777-blocks-gatwick-runway/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14692501/British-Airways-plane-caught-fire-pilot.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://aviationa2z.com/british-airways-777-rejected-takeoff-closed-gatwick-airport/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://aviationa2z.com/british-airways-777-rejected-takeoff-closed-gatwick-airport/), [[4]](https://www.mightytravels.com/2024/12/british-airways-boeing-777-emergency-stop-at-gatwick-causes-50-minute-airport-shutdown/), [[5]](https://airlive.net/news/2024/06/28/breaking-london-gatwick-closed-following-british-airways-boeing-777-ba2279-rejected-take-off/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://aviationa2z.com/british-airways-777-rejected-takeoff-closed-gatwick-airport/), [[4]](https://www.mightytravels.com/2024/12/british-airways-boeing-777-emergency-stop-at-gatwick-causes-50-minute-airport-shutdown/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14692501/British-Airways-plane-caught-fire-pilot.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/06/28/flights-diverted-delayed-boeing-777-blocks-gatwick-runway/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14692501/British-Airways-plane-caught-fire-pilot.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://airlive.net/news/2024/06/28/breaking-london-gatwick-closed-following-british-airways-boeing-777-ba2279-rejected-take-off/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14692501/British-Airways-plane-caught-fire-pilot.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://aviationa2z.com/british-airways-777-rejected-takeoff-closed-gatwick-airport/> - A British Airways Boeing 777-200ER, flight BA2279, aborted its takeoff at Gatwick Airport due to overheated brakes, leading to a temporary runway closure. The incident resulted in 23 flight cancellations and significant passenger disruption. The aircraft, registered G-VIIT, was escorted off the runway by airport fire services. The runway was reopened after a short period, and normal operations resumed. ([aviationa2z.com](https://aviationa2z.com/british-airways-777-rejected-takeoff-closed-gatwick-airport/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/06/28/flights-diverted-delayed-boeing-777-blocks-gatwick-runway/> - On June 28, 2024, a British Airways Boeing 777-200ER, flight BA2279, aborted its takeoff at Gatwick Airport due to a technical issue, causing the main runway to be closed for 38 minutes. This led to the diversion of numerous flights and significant delays for thousands of passengers. The airport's fire service responded promptly to cool the overheated brakes. The runway was reopened, and operations returned to normal. ([telegraph.co.uk](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/06/28/flights-diverted-delayed-boeing-777-blocks-gatwick-runway/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.mightytravels.com/2024/12/british-airways-boeing-777-emergency-stop-at-gatwick-causes-50-minute-airport-shutdown/> - A British Airways Boeing 777-200ER, flight BA2279, performed a high-speed aborted takeoff at Gatwick Airport due to overheated brakes, resulting in a 50-minute runway closure. This incident led to the diversion of multiple flights and highlighted concerns about the airline's aging fleet. The event underscored the need for stringent maintenance of older aircraft to prevent such disruptions. ([mightytravels.com](https://www.mightytravels.com/2024/12/british-airways-boeing-777-emergency-stop-at-gatwick-causes-50-minute-airport-shutdown/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://airlive.net/news/2024/06/28/breaking-london-gatwick-closed-following-british-airways-boeing-777-ba2279-rejected-take-off/> - British Airways flight BA2279, a Boeing 777-200ER, aborted its takeoff at Gatwick Airport due to a technical issue, leading to a temporary closure of the main runway. The aircraft was met by fire trucks and was moved to a remote area after the incident. The runway was reopened after a short period, and normal operations resumed. ([airlive.net](https://airlive.net/news/2024/06/28/breaking-london-gatwick-closed-following-british-airways-boeing-777-ba2279-rejected-take-off/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.aeronewsjournal.com/2024/06/scary-scenes-at-heathrow-as-ground.html> - On June 24, 2024, a ground stair vehicle caught fire near a British Airways Airbus A320 at London Heathrow Airport’s Terminal 5. The fire originated from a set of mobile stairs attached to the aircraft, causing a significant blaze and thick smoke. No injuries were reported, and the fire was promptly extinguished. ([aeronewsjournal.com](https://www.aeronewsjournal.com/2024/06/scary-scenes-at-heathrow-as-ground.html?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://time.com/4025974/british-airways-plane-catches-fire-on-las-vegas-runway/> - On September 8, 2015, a British Airways Boeing 777-200ER, flight BA2276, caught fire on the runway at McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas. The fire was caused by an uncontained engine failure during takeoff, leading to the evacuation of all 170 people on board. Two individuals sustained minor injuries, and the incident resulted in the closure of runway 7L until the following morning. ([time.com](https://time.com/4025974/british-airways-plane-catches-fire-on-las-vegas-runway/?utm_source=openai))