

I was the captain on FDX flight 1026, EWR to LAX on Wednesday, August 19, 2020.

Preflight, departure and enroute portions of the flight were all uneventful.

Los Angeles approach control cleared us for the ILS to runway 24R and at approximately 1800 feet, when lowering the landing gear handle, the left main gear indicated unsafe and we received a GEAR DISAGREE eicas message. We elected to discontinue the approach and climbed up to 5000 feet to complete the QRH checklist procedure while being vectored out over the water by LA approach control. The checklist eventually directed us to lower the landing gear using the ALT GEAR EXT system, which we attempted but this action did not solve the problem. The next step in the checklist simply stated to land using all the available gear.

I asked if it would be possible for us to make a low approach over the airfield so that tower personnel could visually inspect the aircraft to ascertain the actual condition of the left main landing gear. They responded yes and we subsequently flew a low approach to runway 24L, leveling at about 500 feet over the airport. During climb out from this approach tower informed us that they were uncertain whether the left gear was down. We agreed to declare an emergency. They suggested we attempt a second low approach with airport operations personnel positioned along the runway in order to get a better inspection of our aircraft.

Prior to this second low approach, I became the Pilot Flying and flew the low approach to runway 24L down to approximately 200-300 feet above the airport. Upon completion of this second approach tower informed us that they could positively confirm that the left main landing gear was up.

We climbed back up to 5000 feet out over the water and accepted vectors from LA approach control while we considered our options and attempted to contact maintenance and a FedEx tech pilot for any additional information/recommendations they might be able to provide us. Maintenance suggested that we attempt to maneuver the airplane in such a way as to possibly release the unsafe gear, which we did, but without success. The first officer and I discussed the details of the remaining items on the GEAR DISAGREE checklist, what techniques would be best for accomplishing the gear up landing, and exactly what our evacuation plan would be after the aircraft came to a stop. Additionally, we were provided a cellphone number to try to contact a FedEx tech pilot directly, but were unable to make a successful cellphone call from the cockpit.

We had been monitoring our fuel state closely and determined that now it was down to the point where it was time to execute the gear up approach/landing. LA approach control vectored us to an ILS approach to runway 25R which is the longest runway at LAX. I flew the approach coupled down to approximately 200 feet, disconnected the autopilot, and made a normal landing touchdown. I was able to keep the left engine nacelle from contacting the runway as we decelerated and then, after the left engine contacted the runway maintain directional control with ailerons, rudder and finally right wheel braking. We manually deployed the speedbrakes and the airplane came to a stop on runway centerline approximately 2000 to 3000 feet from the end of the runway.

Immediately after we stopped we executed the Evacuation checklist. The left engine fire lights/bell activated just as we stopped. We secured the airplane per the checklist and began evacuating through the first officer's window/escape rope primarily due to concern for possible fire on the left side of the aircraft. The first officer lost his grip on the escape rope during his egress and fell onto the runway injuring his ankle/heel. Just as I was about to begin my egress down the escape rope, crash/rescue personnel informed me that there was no fire and that they could assist me by driving a vehicle with a platform/stairs up to the right side cockpit window and I could egress onto the platform instead of sliding down the rope.

Crash/rescue personnel assisted the first officer and immediately transported him from the scene in an ambulance. I remained at the aircraft until I was informed that the scene was secure and FedEx maintenance personnel had arrived.