

AVSIM Commercial Aircraft Review

Dash 8-300 Training Edition 2004



Product Information

Publishers: [Majestic Software](#)

Description: Dash 8 Trainer.

Download Size:
65 MB

Format:
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Simulation Type:
FS9/FSX

Reviewed by: [Marlon Carter](#) AVSIM Staff Reviewer - October 29, 2009

Introduction

Some years ago the Dash 300 by Majestic software had been reviewed by Zane Gard, but I thought that for the sake of persons who are not familiar with this aircraft or the Dash 8 itself, I would provide some background information.

The Bombardier Dash 8 (formerly the de Havilland Canada Dash 8, sometimes abbreviated as DHC-8) is a series of twin-engine, medium range, turboprop airliners. Introduced by de Havilland Canada (DHC) in 1984, they are now produced by Bombardier Aerospace. Some variants of the Dash 8 are the 100, 200, 300 and 400 series all available in "Q" models which means that these aircrafts will have an Active Noise and Vibration Suppression (ANVS) system designed to reduce cabin noise and vibration levels to nearly those of jet airliners.

Because of its efficiency, the Dash 8 has become a popular choice for regional travel which means there are a lot of pilots out there who fly this aircraft. Given this fact, Majestic software has set a new standard in flight simulation by creating a near full systems simulation of the Dash8 300 series. The in-depth programming and features of this product is nothing short of phenomenal. Due to its complexity, the developer has created 3 versions of the aircraft. The Pilot edition, the Pro edition and the Training edition.

In this review we will take a closer look at the features of the training edition which is the most advanced of their Dash8-Q300 series and is intended as a training aid for professional pilots and technicians, as well as the CBT system's familiarization and demonstrations. The training edition is a former AIRLINE edition, which was already in use for some time in the numerous flight schools for pilots and technicians training. This edition provides the full range of failures in every aircraft system using the included instructor station, as well as our new guide on how to utilize the capabilities of this software to prepare for the recurrent pilot proficiency checks. The training edition supports a full hardware enabled cockpit, and can be used to build home cockpits of various complexities from the ground up.

As mentioned before this is quite a complex simulation and it is nearly mandatory that you read the manual if want to get off of the ground. This product has been in development since 2001 and was initially introduced as a freeware package, then an even better payware package. For me personally, the Dash 8 has always been one of my favorite aircraft. I have had countless jump seat rides and I have many friends who fly the aircraft, some of them have said that this product has helped greatly in giving them the edge over other pilot applicants. Lets get started on our review.

Installation and Documentation

The installation of this package runs just the same as the Pro edition, very easy with a step by step installation shield. While installing this aircraft you are given a choice of what simulation platform you may wish to install the aircraft on, whether it is FS9 or FSX. This is no small detail because many developers will charge you separately for a FS9 or FSX version.

Documentation is very much the same as was mentioned in the Pro Edition review with the exception of The Checkride Training Guide which is what we will be focusing on in this review. Other documents that are available include a Quick start guide, User Guide, Technical tutorials with information on updating Nav data and INI issues, Hardware cockpit interface, links to video tutorials and checklists.

Why have a training edition?

According to the developer: " *The training edition was originally released as an airline edition, due to the fact that we have received numerous requests from the airline pilots and instructors who've needed inexpensive software that would allow them to do the system training at home. The airline*

version however, was priced based upon the unlimited use within the airline. For that reason we have made a special training edition available that lacks a few functions only airlines would need (like the real Flight Data Recording analysis and playback). But still allows for a full system demonstration and failures training at home."

Will the average simmer be able to benefit from this package?

According to the developer: " In my opinion, an average flight sim user would rather use a cheaper edition that is still a very realistic simulation except for the extended failures, typically they would only be needed for the serious study of the airplane.

The training edition, however, would benefit the advanced flight sim users who do utilize a more sophisticated simulation setup, such as flight yokes, pedals, and special hardware up to the full blown home cockpits. It is only one of a few available aircraft add-on products on the flight sim market that does have a complete hardware interface built in that allows to build and interface every switch, light and indicator that is available in the real cockpit to our software."

Let's go do our Checkride!

Well it's no secret that every 6 months Commercial pilots do a proficiency checkride to prove their skills in handling emergency situations. These checks are also required to extend the validity of pilot licenses. This does not mean that a flight instructor will be allowed to select all kinds of malfunctions on his instructor station. It is the Authority that generally determines what malfunctions and procedures have to be practiced at every proficiency check. But there are a few more malfunctions that will have to be worked on, which are based on a 3 years cycle.

The requirements of the authority normally cover a fire scenario with emergency evacuation, single engine approach and go around, single engine landing and a rejected take-off. Aircraft and pilots that hold a CATII or CATIII certification will additionally have to perform CATII/III approaches and missed approaches on the simulator. Between the flights there might be a control change to make sure that each pilot demonstrates his skills as the flying pilot as well as the non-flying pilot. A typical proficiency check usually takes 3 hours.

Test System
Pentium 4 2.6Mhz 1 Gig Ram 128 ATI 9200 Graphics
Flying Time: 4 hours

Checkride 1

Our first checkride takes place at LOWL airport. These are the conditions we are expecting, LOWL: SALOWL xx0420Z 24003KT 2000 -SN FEW008 BKN010M02/M04 Q1003 WS ALL RWY NOSIG FTLOWL xx0330Z xx04/xx10 25005KT 3000 FEW015 BKN020 TX00/xx14Z TNM04/xx03ZBCMG xx18/xx01 29002KT 2000 BKN010 Runway report RWY 09: covered with 2mm of snow, braking action medium to good.

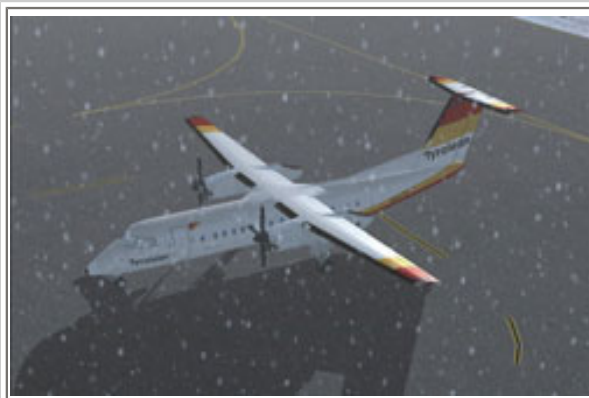
Checkride remarks: Takeoff RWY 09, SID Suben 2T. Airwork ILS approach RWY 09, go around due to blocked RWY with engine failure when selecting gear up, VOR approach RWY 09. Full stop landing RWY 09.

Much more detail of how to handle this emergency is provided but we won't spoil the fun by telling you everything just yet. So here we go.

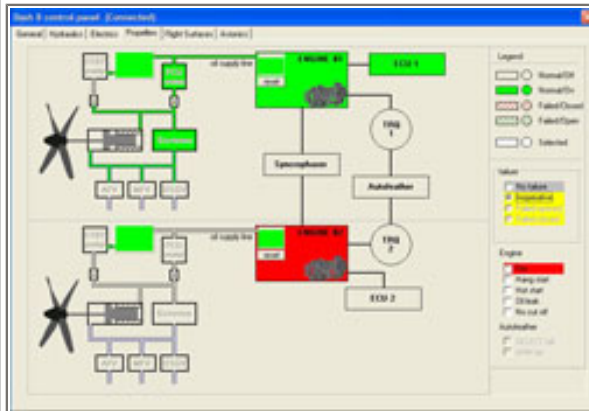
So we took off from RWY09 and flew the Suben 2T departure all manually. This was quite fun and it really made me feel like I was doing something instead of just watching an aircraft fly by autopilot. After climbing through 3500ft we turned to 270 heading to intercept the R290. After doing some air work which includes stall recovery and steep turns, we headed back to the field for the ILS09 approach.

On final we executed a go around and this is where all the fun began (ok, it wasn't really fun) but after initiating an engine failure from the control panel, the aircraft responded swiftly by yawing to the left. By following the engine failure procedures you are better able to fly the aircraft. I would highly recommend using a rudder pedal with this aircraft to make it a lot more realistic.

The VOR approach back to RWY09 was uneventful and we managed to put her down with quite a nice landing, if I may say so myself, but then my ego got all puffed up and we slide off the side of the runway while trying to stop. Here are some screenshots



Aircraft ready for startup Suben 2T departure heading 270@ 5000ft



Control panel with engine failure selected Engine two failure while on go final



Seconds before touchdown

Checkride 2

Our second checkride also takes place at LOWL. The training item for this session is to Takeoff RWY 09, SID Suben 2T with an engine fire when passing 100kts during take-off. Further remarks include; Memorize the burning engine procedure. As soon as the aircraft has stopped select parking brake (that's something that many pilots forget). Then shut down the engines, pull the fire handles, select the fuel pumps off and discharge both fire bottles into the burning engine.

Note that the fire indication might go off during deceleration as fuel into the engine will be reduced with the power levers. Therefore it is very important that at least one pilot remembers which engine has been on fire. Let's see how this turns out.

This check ride is done by the co-pilot so we will be sitting in the right seat. As we depart RWY09 we encounter an engine fire on engine number 1 and after following the procedures we were able to abort takeoff and shut down all engines to take care of this emergency.



Taxiing to RWY09 Engine fire at 100kts



Engine Fire selected on control panel Full reverse and max braking



Engines shutdown and Fire bottles about to be uses

This check ride was fairly simple but required being able to memorize procedures in a situation where things are happening very quickly.

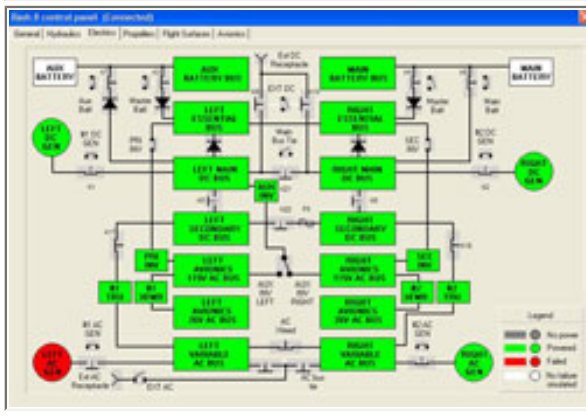
You have to concentrate on stopping the aircraft, remembering which engine has the fire, shutting down the aircraft, putting out the fire and evacuating passengers.

Checkride 3

Our third checkride takes place at LOSA airport. Weather conditions are IMC with the weather radar onboard inoperative. The objective of this session is to takeoff from RWY 30, SID Bosna 1A with an AC Generator failure when passing 10.000 ft (to make sure pilots don't get bored during climb), resettable. Rapid decompression after reaching FL250. The training guide provides all the information you need in order to deal with this emergency, I suggest printing this guide out.



This repaint did not come with this package AC Gen failure while passing 10,000



AC Gen failure selected on Control panel Climbing to FL250



Cabin decompression at FL250 Following procedures, 30 degrees of track, IAS Vmo to 10,000

This check ride was quite interesting; The AC busses power mainly to the electrical heaters for the deicing equipment of the aircraft, so failure of this is very significant especially in cold weather. Rapid decompression at FL250 calls for swift action since a lot of things has to be done in order to get the aircraft down to 10,000 ft.

This check ride, while not difficult, can be challenging since you have to do all of this while hand flying the aircraft. Most of us are used to hand flying an aircraft up to 1000 or 2000 feet then the autopilot goes on, so practicing this type of hand flying will really improve your abilities as a virtual pilot and in real life.

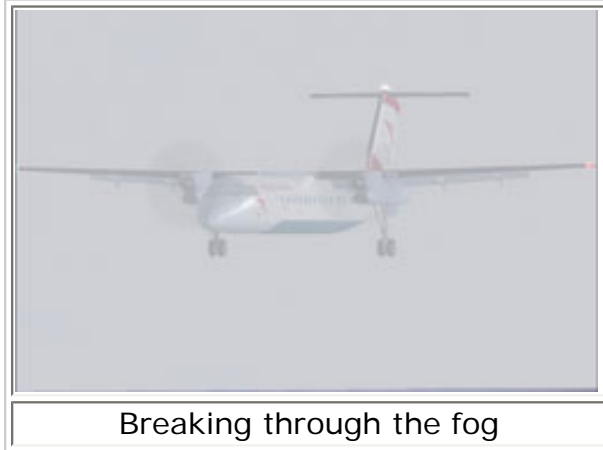
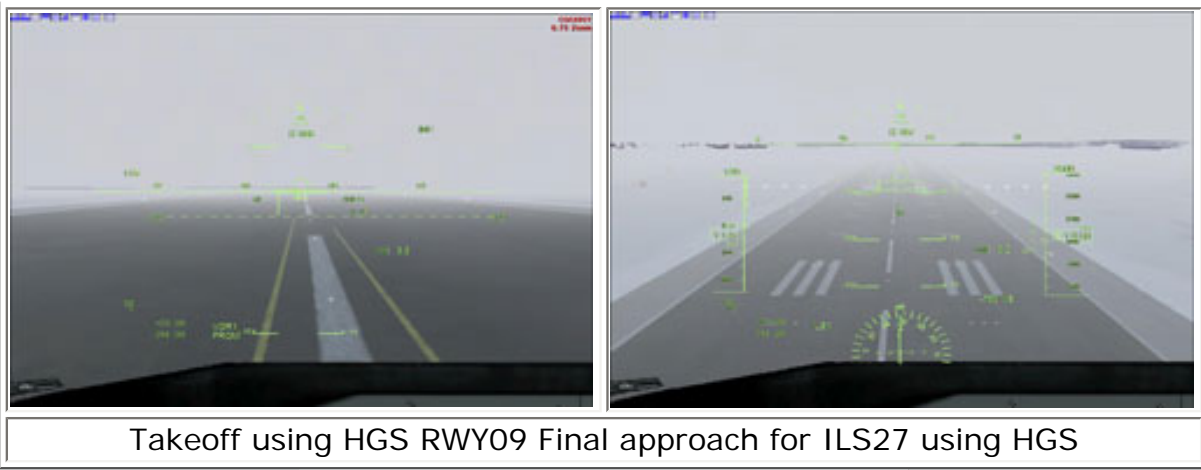
Checkride 4,5

Our last checkride takes place back at LOWL airport. The objective is to takeoff from RWY 09, SID Suben 2T. Thereafter, radar vectors for ILS 27 LNZ CAT III training using head up guidance system. This should be fun since the HGS is a great and highly realistic feature of this product.

As mentioned earlier, training remarks are made for each session and it give exact details on how each checkride is to be carried out including procedures. After our final checkride, the remaining time can be used to simulate other failures and emergency procedures. For example, if you have ever wanted to fly having a rudder jam along with an engine failure and cabin decompression, now is your chance to do so!



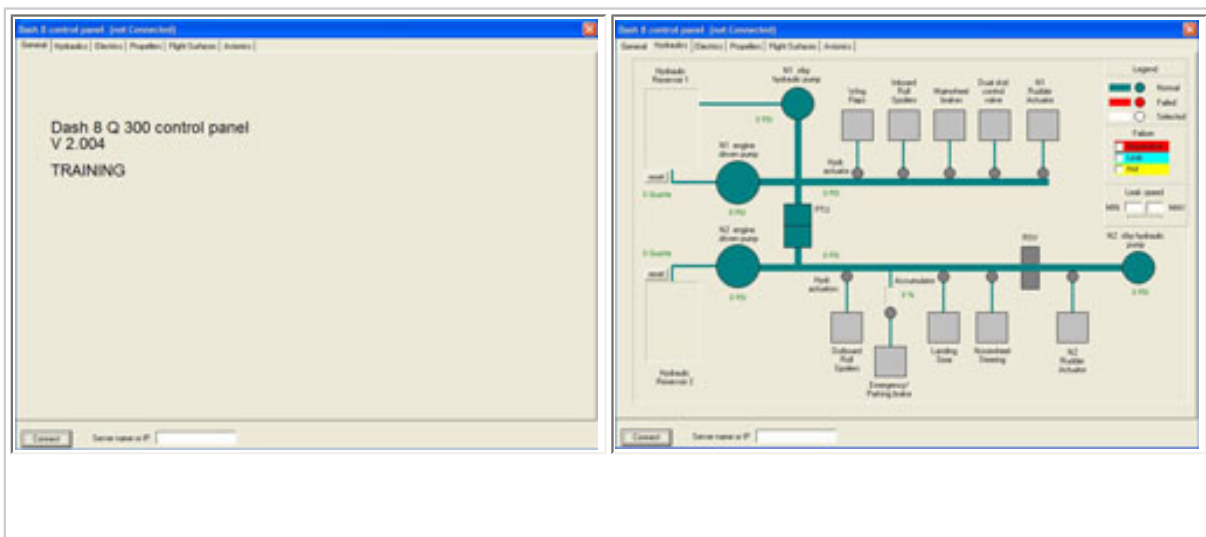
HGS data entered and ready to taxi Taxiing in near 0 visibility

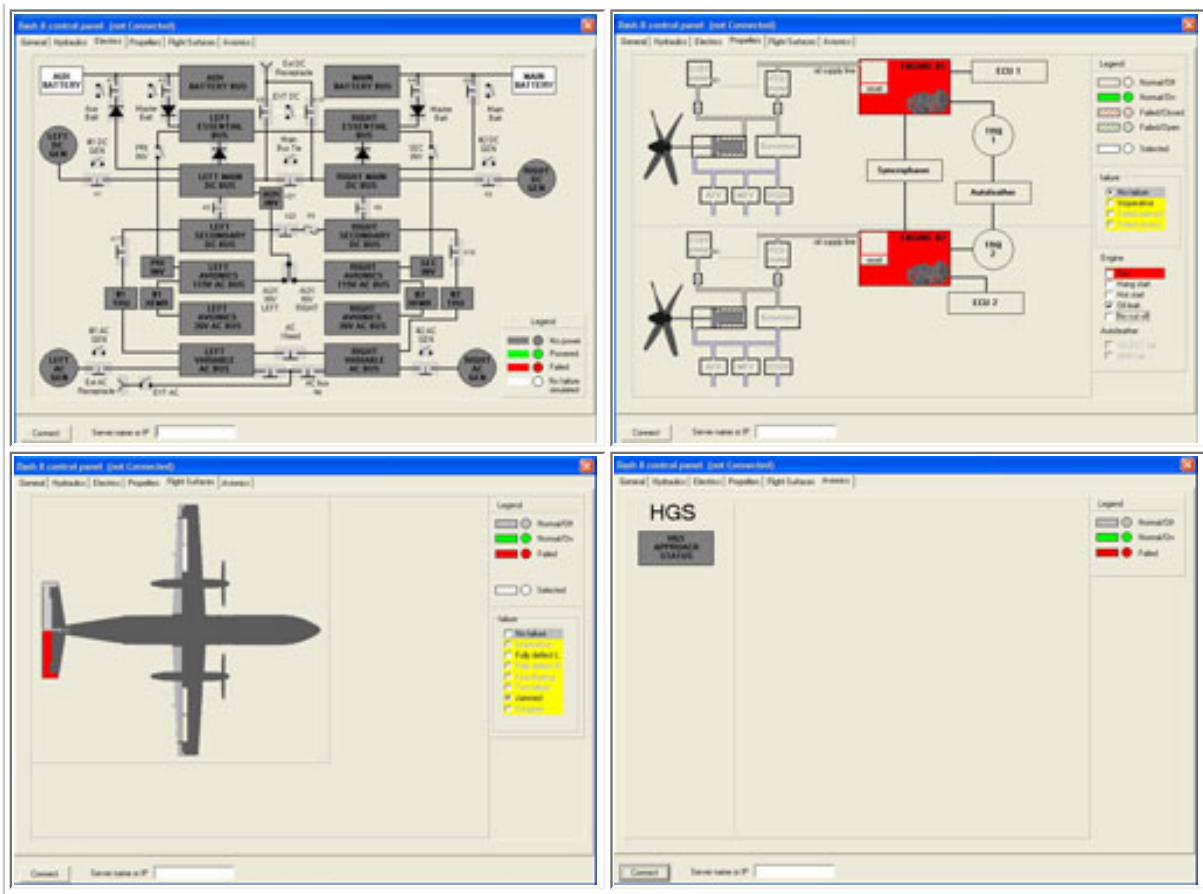


I would honestly say that after the engine failure on go around, this is the most challenging check ride. This calls for good knowledge of IFR flying and ILS approaches. Using the NDB was also a treat since its not often you have to use this navigation aid for any type of approach at modern airports.

Using the HGS might seem intimidating but it is quite an advantage to traditional cockpit instrument guided approaches. Anyone who has the product will really enjoy these check rides and using this feature while flying in general.

Random shots of the control panel and its in-depth systems, all of which can be tampered with ?





Connecting the control panel to your simulator is quite simple. You can either connect to your own system or another computer provided that you have the other users IP address. Be mindful that firewall or mask settings may need to be changed if any difficulties arise in establishing connection.

Summary

The Majestic Software Dash8 300 training edition is quite a unique product. Never before have I come across an add-on for any home flight simulator that is so in-depth and practical for real life use. If you ask me, this product has perhaps been grossly underrated.

As mentioned earlier, this product is targeted at more advanced simmers who know a thing or two about turbo props and aircraft systems. The price of this product may seem a bit steep, but this product is very advanced and paying 199 Euros for a product that can help a pilot have the edge in keeping or getting a job is definitely worth it.

The product may not be a Level D simulator, but it surely helps in getting familiar with the Dash 8's systems. Not to mention, this product also allows experienced simmers to have a more realistic experience while flying at home. The scenarios that can be created are almost endless and it surely creates some excitement to those uneventful flights when you have a friend cut your engines on final while in IMC conditions. I honestly recommend having this aircraft or its lesser priced versions added to your flight sim hangar.

What I Like About The Dash 8-300 Training Edition

- A very practical tool that brings not only enjoyment to the simulation experience, but is also a useful tool in aiding real world pilots to become proficient for their next Dash 8 checkride.
- The systems of the Dash 8 are so thorough that real airlines use this product to train their pilots and sift through new hires.
- Flight simmers are finally given an opportunity to explore an aspect of real world flying by actually going through airline training procedures.
- Many improvements have been made since the last review of the Majestic Software Dash 8, including navdata updates to the FMS.

What I Don't Like About The Dash 8-300 Training Edition

- What's not to like? This product can either be useful in helping you keep your job or getting one!

Printing

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[Dash 8-300 Training Edition](#)

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Comments?

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