Beat: Miscellaneous

Russian airliner crashes onto highway near Moscow, killing 4

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USPA News - A Russian airliner flying without passengers broke into pieces Saturday after it overran a runway and crashed onto a highway near Moscow, killing four crew members and critically injuring four others, officials said. The cause was not immediately known.

The accident happened at 4:35 p.m. local time on Saturday when Red Wings Airlines flight 9268, a Tupolev Tu-204 aircraft which is capable of carrying more than 200 people, was attempting to land at Vnukovo International Airport just outside of Moscow. It was carrying eight crew members but no passengers. A spokesperson for Russia`s Ministry of Emergencies Situations said four people were killed, including both pilots, a flight engineer and a flight attendant. The four other crew members, who were all identified as flight attendants, were critically injured and suffered from severe, traumatic brain injuries. Authorities said the aircraft was attempting to land at Vnukovo International Airport after a flight from an airport in Pardubice, the capital of the Pardubice Region in the Czech Republic. Photos and video from the scene showed the plane had overshot the runway, broke through a fence and crashed into an adjacent highway where several cars were hit by debris. Russia`s Investigative Committee said it opened a criminal investigation into the cause of the accident, but such an investigation is a standard procedure after aviation accidents in the country. "All possible causes are being considered, including pilot error, bad weather, and technical failure of the aircraft," a spokesperson said, adding that the plane`s flight recorders were recovered. Russia has seen a number of major aviation accidents over the last few years, in part because of its use of old aircraft, although industry experts also point to other problems such as poor crew training, out-of-date airports, lax government controls, and neglect of safety to maximize profits. In early April, a passenger plane operated by UTair Aviation crashed shortly after takeoff from an airport in Siberia, killing 32 people and injuring 11 survivors. It followed the crash of a Yak-Service Airlines plane in Yaroslavl Oblast in September 2011, killing all but one of the 37 passengers and 8 crew members on board. Among those killed were players and coaching staff of the Lokomotiv Yaroslavl professional ice hockey team.

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