Powerback Procedure - Supplemental Guidance

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MINIMUM EQUIPMENT

Aircraft must be approved for powerback, fully serviceable and not be dispatched with any ADD affecting the braking system or reverse thrust system.

OVERVIEW

Powerback is the procedure of using reverse thrust in order to push back from the parking stand without the need for any external pushback tug. This can save time, reduce delays and lower the cost of each turnaround. Although it is normal procedure to taxi-in and taxi-out, there will be occasions whereby a powerback may be required. Although this can introduce additional operation risk, with effective mitigations the procedure can be completed safely.

PURPOSE & SCOPE

The document is to be used in addition to DHC6 Operations Manual Part B in which the SOP for the procedure is contained in order to provide a consistently safe powerback procedure whenever and wherever it is performed. The document shall be used in order to mitigate the increased risks of performing a powerback before the maneuver is performed. Risks are identified as well as considerations to mitigate against identified risks as well as green operating procedures which can be used in order to reduce carbon emissions.

PREREQUISITES

Prohibited on contaminated aprons and taxi-ways, where precluded by aerodrome operating restrictions and should be performed with extra care when the power-back procedure is completed and brakes applied with a strong headwind. If local operating restrictions prohibit the use or power-back, power-back must NOT be performed.

GREEN OPERATING TECHNIQUES

Where operationally and procedurally appropriate, crews should consider the environmental impact of powerback operations. Because powerback requires the use of both engines, an assisted pushback followed by single-engine taxi may provide lower fuel consumption during extended taxi operations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Following this procedure remains the responsibility of the Captain.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

CAUTION: If at any time it cannot be confirmed that an aircraft is certified or equipped to perform power back, or if the prerequisites cannot be guaranteed throughout the entire procedure, power back must not be performed. If prerequisites are no longer guaranteed once the procedure has begun, the procedure must immediately be stopped.

Phase 1: Pre-Powerback

1. Confirm aircraft applicability and MEL status.
2. Verify the apron surface is clear of FOD, ground support equipment (GSE), and personnel.
3. Brief passengers regarding engine noise changes on the ground.
4. Obtain clearance from ATC (where available) and Ground Crew.

Phase 2: Execution

1. Conduct powerback strictly in accordance with De Havilland Canada SOPs.
2. Both pilots maintain active lookout in all directions.

Phase 3: Termination

1. Arrest rearward momentum completely using **forward thrust (Alpha range)**.
2. **DO NOT** apply wheel brakes while the aircraft is moving backward.
3. Once rearward motion has ceased, apply wheel brakes / set parking brake.
4. Reset propellers to Ground Beta and signal ground staff clear.

PREVENTING IDENTIFIED RISKS

RISK	POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCE	CONTROL MEASURE
FOD	Ground staff are at higher risk of injury of being hit by FOD.	Ground staff must be made aware when power-back is to be performed. Both pilots are to ensure the area is clear before and during the procedure.
TAIL TIPPING	Aircraft are susceptible to an increased tail tipping risk, particularly at the end of the procedure with an aft CofC.	Crew to ensure the use of forward thrust is used to stop the aircraft before applying brakes.
INCORRECT AIRCRAFT APPLICABILITY	Aircraft may not be suitably equipped to safely perform this procedure.	A careful check must be made to ensure the specific aircraft registration is listed as approved to perform this procedure.
PASSENGER PANIC/ SELF-EVACUATION	High levels of noise during the procedure may concern passengers, increasing the risk of self-evacuation.	Crews should incorporate the message “sudden changes in engine noise on the ground are completely normal for this aircraft type” into their safety briefing/welcome announcement.
PERSONNEL ENTERING THE MANEUVERING AREA	Ground staff may wander too close to the aircraft during the maneuver.	Ground staff must be made aware of the intention to perform a powerback and must lookout for ground staff returning from assisting other aircraft from getting too close to the aircraft.

ASSOCIATED REFERENCES

- DHC-6 Pilot's Operating Handbook (POH)
- Island Airways Operations Manual Part A (General)
- Island Airways Operations Manual Part B (DHC-6 Aircraft Systems & SOPs)

Wherever a discrepancy or conflict occurs between the two documents, the most restrictive limitation shall be applied. If any doubt exists, powerback must not be performed.

REVISION HISTORY:

Revision	Date	Description	Author
001	10/10/2026	Initial	J Smith