



MEDIA RELEASE

PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION RELEASES REPORT INTO RECIPROCAL TRACK AIRSPACE PROXIMITY INCIDENT

On 17 October 2017, the Papua New Guinea Accident Investigation Commission released its final report into a reciprocal track airspace proximity incident.

The incident occurred on 2 June 2017, when a de Havilland Canada DHC-8-102 (Dash 8) aircraft and a Quest Kodiak 100 aircraft, were involved in a reciprocal track airspace proximity incident. The Kodiak was 6.8 nm west of Nadzab Airport, Morobe Province, PNG. The Dash 8, was being operated on a scheduled passenger flight from Mt Hagen, Western Highlands Province, to Lae (Nadzab Airport), Morobe Province. The Kodiak, was being operated on a private flight from Lae (Nadzab Airport), to Aiyura, Eastern Highlands Province.

The Dash 8's recorded data from the Flight Data Recorder, and the Kodiak operator's satellite based *Flight Following* software was analysed in the **AIC's Flight Recorder Laboratory** in Port Moresby, PNG. Air Traffic Control recorded data was also analysed.

The investigation found that both aircraft were being controlled by the same air traffic controller, on the same radio frequency. The crew of the Dash 8 had been assigned an inbound track to Nadzab on the 288° Radial of the Nadzab navigation aid (108° magnetic track to Nadzab). However, the pilot of the Dash 8 incorrectly read back the track as 088°. The air traffic controller did not correct the pilot's error.

Subsequently, when the controller informed the pilot of the Kodiak that the inbound aircraft, the Dash 8, was intercepting the 288° R, the pilot of the Dash 8 did not inform the controller that he was tracking 088° M (the 268°R), so the error went undetected.

While on the unintended reciprocal tracks, the Dash 8 was cleared to descend, and the Kodiak was cleared to climb. The Kodiak pilot saw the approaching Dash 8 and turned left in an avoidance manoeuvre. At the point of turning, the Kodiak and the Dash 8 had a vertical separation of 218 feet and closing, and a lateral separation of 3.2 nautical miles at a closing speed of 321 kts. They were 36 seconds apart and closing at 5.3 nm/min.

The investigation found that neither the Approach Controller nor the crew of the Dash 8 detected the tracking errors. The undetected tracking errors, and the Approach Controller's incorrect application of lateral and vertical separation, likely contributed to the potentially unsafe reciprocal track airspace proximity incident between the Dash 8 and the Kodiak.

Download the full report AIC 17-2001:

<http://www.aic.gov.pg/pdf/FinRpts/2017/AIC%2017-2001%20P2-MCH%20&%20P2-SID.pdf>

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