

## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER

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Safety recommendation: AIC 20-05/19-2001

Addressed to: National Airports Corporation (NAC)

Date issued: 18 May 2020

Investigation link: AIC 19-2001

**Action status: Issued** 

## Safety deficiency description

On 22 May 2019, at 07:11 UTC (17:11 local), a major power outage occurred at Jacksons International Airport, Port Moresby, National Capital District, which lasted for 13 hours and 29 minutes. During the power outage, four aircraft that conducted scheduled passenger operations (3 domestic and 1 international) under Instrument Flight Rules<sup>1</sup> (IFR) to Jacksons were affected. Two of the aircraft diverted to alternate airports. For the two-remaining aircraft, one was able to continue and land at Jacksons, while the international flight had to delay at the departure airport in order to arrive at Jacksons during daylight.

In the context of the occurrence, Jacksons International Airport was unable to maintain the provision of the services, operational baseline declared in the PNG AIP and required by national regulations and international standards for commercial aircraft operation, including landing and navigation aids, runway and taxiway landings amongst others, due to the failure of both the primary and secondary sources of electrical power.

The lack of services availability affected four aircraft conducting commercial air transport passenger operations. Only one of the aircraft that was informed about the power outage 19 minutes after it commenced was able to continue the approach and landing using other aids that remained available and visual references because the weather conditions showed no restrictions for VMC and natural lighting was still present.

Nevertheless, at the time of the occurrence the secondary power source was unable to enter into operation as a consequence of faulty and failed essential operational components. The investigation documented that environmental conditions, prolonged use of obsolete components, improper and inadequate

<sup>1</sup> IFR, Rules applied in cloud or whenever external cues are below VFR minima which prohibit non-IFR pilots/aircraft. Source: The Cambridge Aerospace Dictionary.

maintenance and servicing, lack of technical documentation and proper training for technical personnel contributed to the occurrence.

Safety management processes described in NAC Safety Management System Manual were mostly focused on identifying changes directly related to operational activities, and may not be able to identify factors regarding significant restructuring of the organisation or significant changes in staffing levels and key personnel as triggers for formal management of change processes. Under the conditions observed, the safety management processes currently in place will not prevent similar occurrences to happen in the future.

It was only on 12 September 2019 (four months after the occurrence) that NAC conducted a *Risk Assessment* to the operation of the secondary power supply in which a series of hazards, risks and mitigating actions were internally identified.

The AIC has concluded that the power systems at Jacksons International Airport did not meet the operational baseline required to comply with the minimum international standards of ICAO Annex 14 - Aerodromes and national regulations included in CAR Part 139 Aerodrome – Certification and Operation to ensure operational continuity for air transport operations. Upgrading Jacksons Airport power systems will be essential to actually meet the minimum standards to ensure that continuous reliable power is supplied to essential facilities and services, to avoid similar occurrences jeopardizing safety in the future.

## Recommendation number AIC 20-05/19-2001 to NAC

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) recommends that the National Airport Corporation should review the safety management processes and procedures, including but not limited to those contained in the Safety Management System Manual and Risk Assessment Template to ensure that:

- 1) Processes and procedures related to management of change enable to identify significant restructuring of the organization, significant changes in staffing levels and key personnel as triggers for formal management of change processes. (Recommendation number AIC 20-05/19-2001a).
- 2) Safety management responsibilities with regard to management of change are at the appropriate organisational levels to ensure operational, environmental and strategic factors that could trigger these processes are able to be identified (**Recommendation number AIC 20-05/19-2001b**).
- 3) The applicable processes and procedures are reviewed and updated to ensure consistency between the *Risk Assessment Template* and the effective safety management actions (**Recommendation number AIC 20-05/19-2001c**).

## **Action requested**

The AIC requests that NAC note recommendation AIC 20-05/19-2001, and provide a response to the AIC within 90 days of the issue date, and explain (including with evidence) how NAC has addressed the safety deficiency identified in the safety recommendation.

According to AIC assessment, the plan will address the aim of Safety recommendation AIC 20-05/19-2001c when fully implemented. Evidence on effective implementation, if provided by NAC, will allow AIC to reassess the Status of the Recommendation if necessary. The AIC assigned this response as a *satisfactory intent* and recorded the **Status of the AIC recommendation**: **CLOSED RESPONSE ACCEPTED**.

HUBERT NAMANI, LLB

Lunaux

Chief Commissioner
8 September 2020