



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER

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Safety recommendation: AIC 20-R30/19-2002

Addressed to: Air Niugini Limited

Date issued: 2 October 2020

Investigation link: AIC 19-2002

Action status: Closed

Introduction

On 21 November 2019, at about 16:00 local time (06:00 UTC), the Papua New Guinea Accident Investigation Commission became aware about an alleged occurrence earlier that afternoon, involving a Fokker 70 aircraft, registered P2-ANY, owned and operated by Air Niugini Limited.

On 22 November 2019, at 16:13, upon request of the AIC, Papua New Guinea Air Services Limited provided details of the occurrence. Subsequently, the AIC commenced an investigation and immediately dispatched a team of investigators to Air Niugini Limited head office to commence onsite activities.

Occurrence

On 21 November 2019, at about 15:21 local time (05:21 UTC), a Fokker 70 aircraft, registered P2-ANY, owned and operated by Air Niugini Limited, while conducting a scheduled flight from Tokua Airport, East New Britain Province to Jacksons International Airport, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea experienced a rapid depressurisation event during a normal descent, about 51 nm North East of Jacksons.

The aircraft had four crew; two pilots and two Cabin Crew and 41 passengers.

P2-ANY landed at 15:47, and taxied to the parking bay where a normal disembarkation was conducted for all passengers and crew. There were no injuries or damage reported.

Safety deficiency description

The investigation found that before or during the emergency descent, the flight crew did not refer to the emergency descent checklist. A few of the action items such as donning of crew oxygen masks and communication checks were items from other checklists, and were actioned from those other checklists. However, a number of action items were not actioned at the appropriate time and circumstances. These included turning the 'seatbelt sign/no smoking sign' on, 'notifying ATC', and setting the 'transponder' squawk code.

The crew were heard referring to the checklist after completing the emergency descent, however, the checklist is intended to be actioned when an emergency descent is decided by the crew.

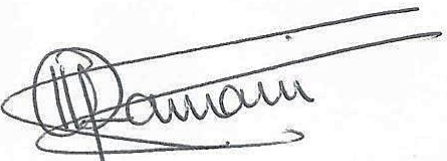
Furthermore, the flight crew did not make the *Rapid Decompression Emergency* PA, prior to and during the emergency descent. The cabin crew were therefore, unaware of the emergency situation.

Recommendation number AIC 20-R30/19-2002 to Air Niugini Limited

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission recommends that Air Niugini Limited should ensure that the use of checklists by crew is reinforced.

Action requested

The AIC requests that Air Niugini Limited note recommendation AIC 20-R30/19-2002, and provide a response to the AIC within 90 days of the issue date, and explain (including with evidence) how Air Niugini Limited has addressed the safety deficiency identified in the safety recommendation.

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Hubert Namani, LLB
Chief Commissioner

2 October 2020

Closing statement

On 17 November 2020, Air Niugini Limited (ANL) provided a response to AIC safety recommendation AIC 20-R30 / 19-2002, stating that;

In case of emergency, the flight crew, members are expected to carry out actions of memory and after attaining a safe situation; they shall refer and carry out emergency actions as per QRH. Hence, Air Niugini proposed that the safety recommendation may be withdrawn. A copy of this procedure is attached.

This is the CASAPNG and OEM approved procedure, and the procedure as followed by the crew:

During and after engine start and prior to take-off, should any condition require the accomplishment of a Non-Normal Procedure, upon completion of the appropriate procedure the MEL is to be consulted to determine if relief is available.

17.3.1 Assessment of Equipment Failure or Status Message after Despatch

In the event of any equipment failure after despatch and prior to take-off or if an EICAS (900EX – CAS) Status message displays, the MEL is to be consulted for despatch relief and/or any operational implications. The PIC, as well as complying with the MEL requirement, should consider the implications of carrying a despatch relief (allowable) defect to the next and subsequent stations.

17.3.2 Non-Normal Checklists

Non-normal checklists are provided to manage non-normal situations. In a non-normal checklist there may be memory/recall items and reference items. Memory items are boxed.

Non-normal checklist actions are to be carried out once the aircraft flight path and configuration are properly established. Only a few situations require an immediate response (e.g. stall warning, GPSW pull-up warning, TCAS RA, and rejected takeoff). Usually, time is available for assessment before corrective action is initiated. All actions should then be co-ordinated under the Captain's supervision and performed in a deliberate, systematic manner. Under no circumstances should flight path control be compromised.

When a non-normal situation is evident, at the PF's command, each crew member systematically and without delay accomplishes recall action items (if any) in their area of responsibility.

NOTE: The crew member responsible for carrying out the actions on irreversible items **prior to accomplishing that action** must have a verbal confirmation that the correct selection has been made of any:

- Thrust lever.
- Fuel control.
- Fire handle.
- Fire switch.
- IDG/CSD disconnect switch.
- IRS

For those checklists which contain only reference items or a combination of recall and reference items, the PF calls for the checklist when the flight path is under control, the aircraft is not in a critical stage of flight (e.g., takeoff, landing) and recall items (if any) are complete.

The PM will then read aloud in sequence each checklist item, including the response. Recall (boxed) items will be rechecked to ensure that the challenged action, i.e., switch position, instrument configuration, etc. has been accomplished.

The checklist reference actions items are read aloud, with appropriate action being taken by the PM. After accomplishing the checklist item, the PM states the checklist response. If a checklist item cannot be completed at that point, the checklist must be held until the required step is completed. When holding the checklist the PM should state, "HOLDING AT _____".

The PF may also direct reference action items to be accomplished by recall, if no hazard is created by such action or if conditions do not permit reference to a checklist. The PF then calls for the appropriate checklist.

Checklist informative items or notes are read aloud. The PF does not repeat such items, but responds in some manner to indicate the information has been understood.

The Checklists provide a list of inoperative equipment, only when knowledge of the condition of such equipment is essential for planning the remainder of the flight.

The PF should be made aware when landing preparation items exist. Accomplishment of such items can be delayed until preparation for approach.

Following completion of each Non-normal checklist, the PM states "_____checklist complete".

Checklists cannot be created for all conceivable events and are not intended to preclude good judgement. In some cases deviation from checklists may, at the discretion of the Captain, be necessary.



The information provided by Air Niugini Limited in response to the safety recommendation was considered against the findings and relevant factual information included in the investigation. It was found that, despite the efforts of the operator to justify the actions of the flight crew, the response does not address the underlying safety deficiency that gave origin to the safety recommendation. Particularly, during the investigation it was clearly identified that the flight crew did not timely and adequately refer to the applicable checklists, hence the importance of ensure that the use of abnormal/emergency QRH checklists is reinforced for flight crews to ensure that relevant checklist items are referred to and actioned in a timely manner. Moreover, the information provided by Air Niugini Limited confirms the importance of the safety recommendation as the *Safety Operating Procedure Manual, Section 17.3.2 Non-Normal Procedures* indicates that Non-normal checklist actions, which by the definition provided under the same Section includes memory/recall items and reference items, are to be carried out once the aircraft flight path and configuration are properly established and later explains that for those checklists like the ones applicable at the onset of the occurrence of interest, the PF calls for the checklist when the flight path is under control, the aircraft is not in a critical stage of flight and recall items are complete. Therefore, according to AIC assessment, Air Niugini Limited response does not address the safety issues and safety deficiencies identified during the investigation.

Therefore, the AIC assigned Air Niugini Limited response as *unsatisfactory* and recorded the **Status of the AIC recommendation: CLOSED RESPONSE NOT ACCEPTED.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hubert Namani', is written over a circular stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end. The stamp is partially obscured by the signature.

Hubert Namani, LLB
Chief Commissioner

18 March 2021