



AIC Head Office,
Level 1, NAQIA Haus, Portion 81, Moera Tobe Rd, 6 Mile
PO Box 1709, Boroko 111
National Capital District
Papua New Guinea

Telephone : (675) 323 2911
Facsimile : (675) 323 2139
Email : abovrega@aic.gov.pg

Safety recommendation: AIC 23-R20/23-1001

Addressed to: North Coast Aviation Limited

Date issued: 24 December 2023

Investigation link: AIC 23-1001

Action status: Issued

Introduction

On 9 February 2023 at 13:30 local time (03:30 UTC), the AIC became aware through social media of an accident involving a PAC 750XL aircraft, registered P2-BJD, owned and operated by North Coast Aviation at Giramben Airstrip, Jiwaka Province. The AIC immediately commenced an investigation, and a team was deployed to the accident site on 10 February 2023.

Occurrence

On 9 February 2023, at 12:50 local time (02:50 UTC¹), a PAC 750XL aircraft, registered P2-BJD (BJD), owned and operated by North Coast Aviation (NCA), was conducting a VFR² Charter flight from Giramben Airstrip, Jiwaka Province to Simbai Airstrip, Madang Province, when during take-off, the aircraft impacted terrain South of Giramben Airstrip.

There were four persons on board the aircraft: one pilot and three passengers; an adult male, an adult female and an infant. The pilot, adult male passenger and infant sustained seriously injured, and female adult passenger had minor injuries.

The aircraft was destroyed.

¹ The 24-hour clock, in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), is used in this report to describe the local time as specific events occurred. Local time in the area of the accident, Papua New Guinea Time (Pacific/Port Moresby) is UTC + 10 hours.

² Visual Flight Rules: Those rules as prescribed by national authority for visual flight, with corresponding relaxed requirements for flight instruments
(Source: The Cambridge Aerospace Dictionary)

Safety deficiency description

The pilot's training and competency records were reviewed, specifically his CRM and SMS records, and it was identified that both trainings were last attended in 2019. Section 12.6 (A) of the operator's *Safety and Quality Manual* states that the SMS Training programme is to begin on the first day of an employee's orientation. Section 12.7 *SMS Recurrent Training* states that all employees will attend occupational specific safety training seminars prepared by the Safety and Quality Manager once every 24 months. This seminar will educate employees on the hazards in their environment and what the Company is doing to mitigate those hazards. The investigation identified that the pilot was overdue for the SMS Recurrent Training.

Furthermore, the investigation found that based on the RAA Survey data, Giramben Airstrip meets the Operator's classification of a Special Characteristic Airstrip. Therefore, the pilot was required to demonstrate to a Check Captain or Line Training Captain, the ability to land and take off at Giramben Airstrip, in accordance with the Operator's *TCM Section 5.3.3 and 5.3.5 (3)*, however, this requirement was not implemented.

In addition, the Operator's *Operations Manual*, Section 2.27.1 *Training Requirements*, it states that:

- A. *North Coast Aviation requires ground handling personnel, including external service providers, to be competent in their roles.*
- B. *Training of ground staff includes (as applicable to their role) job knowledge and skills, company policies and procedures and the following safety elements: safety management awareness, human factors, rules and regulations, accidents and incidents, personal protection, work place hazards, equipment operation, house keeping, emergency situations, airside markings, security and dangerous goods.*
- C. *Recurrent training for Load master and Dangerous Goods Handlers will take place within 24 months of previous training to ensure knowledge is current and for the purpose of reauthorization.*
- D. *Refresher training will take place within 24 months of previous training for the following discipline.*
 - 1. *Passenger, Baggage and Cargo Handling Procedures.*
 - 2. *Ramp Handling Procedures.*
 - 3. *Ramp Safety Training.*
 - 4. *Equipment Operator Training.*

The investigation requested a copy of training records for the Ground Handlers who assisted with the ground handling of the aircraft at Giramben Airstrip on the day of the accident. However, the Operator did not provide any training records to the investigation.

Recommendation number AIC 23-R20/23-1001 to North Coast Aviation Limited

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission recommends that North Coast Aviation should ensure that all its operational personnel, including ground handlers are appropriately trained and qualified, and current in accordance with NCA's training and competency requirements when carrying out their respective duties and responsibilities.

Action requested

The AIC requests that North Coast Aviation Limited note recommendation *AIC 23-R20/23-1001* and provide a response to the AIC within 90 days of the issue date, nor later than 23 March 2024 and explain (including evidence) how NCA has addressed the safety deficiency identified in the safety recommendation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aria Bouraga', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Captain Aria Bouraga, MBE

Acting Chief Commissioner

24 December 2023

North Coast Aviation Limited response to Safety Recommendation AIC 23-R20/23-1001

The AIC did not receive a response from North Coast Aviation (NCA) Limited within the provided 90 days period.

On 26 March 2024, NCA responded via email to the AIC, following AIC's courtesy follow-ups, stating that they would prepare and provide a response with documented evidence of the actions NCA taken so far in to address the safety deficiencies identified in the Safety Recommendation. In the email, NCA also requested for an extension which NCA confirmed in a separate email to be up to the end of July 2024. Subsequently, NCA was granted an extension period to 31 July 2024, as requested by NCA.

On 23 July 2024, NCA responded via email, providing their corrective actions to address the safety deficiency identified in the *Safety Recommendation AIC 23-R20/23-1001*, which was contained in a letter dated 22 July 2024.

The letter stated that NCA had acknowledged the PNG AIC *Safety Recommendation AIC 23-R20/23-1001*. The letter also stated that in order to adhere to the safety recommendation, in-house and externally sourced trainings have been ongoing for all NCA staff since May 2023, which included:

- **Ground Operations Training**
Dangerous Goods Awareness & Acceptance Training; Refuelling Procedures Refresher Training; Loading Procedures Refresher Training; and Load Master Training.
- **Safety Training**
Emergency Response Plan (ERP); Basic Fire Fighting; Hazard & Occurrence Reporting; and Safety Management System (SMS) Awareness Training.

Attached to the letter were copies of signed participants attendance sheet for each Ground Operations and Safety Training that had been conducted, and certificates of random participants. Also attached was a copy of NCA's Annual Safety Training Programme for 2024 which included other trainings such as First Aid and refresher training.

NCA stated, via a telephone call that they plan to provide training to the NCA staff who are yet to complete respective training.

PNG AIC assessment of North Coast Aviation Limited response

The AIC has assessed the response provided by NCA and notes that NCA acknowledges the safety deficiency identified and the recommendation. The AIC also notes that NCA's corrective actions, would address the safety deficiencies identified in *Safety Recommendation AIC 23-R20/23-1001* when all NCA staff have completed relevant training.

The AIC assigned this response a *satisfactory intent* rating.

The AIC recorded the status of the AIC Recommendation: **MONITOR**



Maryanne J Wal
Chief Commissioner

25 July 2024

North Coast Aviation Limited response to Safety Recommendation AIC 23-R20/23-1001

On 7 November 2024, the AIC sent a courtesy email to North Coast Aviation Limited (NCA), on the status of required training for the remaining NCA staff.

NCA provided a response to AIC's email on 22 November 2024, stating that the Safety and Quality Manager (SQM), who oversites training was currently working off site therefore was unable to complete training for the remaining NCA staff. NCA also stated that the SQM was scheduled to do a site visit at Nadzab, at the end of November 2024, which was when the outstanding trainings were planned to be completed.

The AIC did not receive an update on the status of the training by the end of November 2024.

On 14 March 2025, AIC sent another courtesy follow-up email to NCA.

NCA responded on 25 March 2025, stating that the SQM did not do the site visit in November as previously stated, however managed to do the site visit in late February 2025. NCA added that due to the accident that occurred on 22 December 2024 involving their BN2B-26 Islander aircraft, there were no available operational aircraft, resulting in all the staff members been stood down from active duties. With that, it is impossible to complete training.

PNG AIC assessment of North Coast Aviation Limited response

The AIC has assessed the response provided by NCA and notes that due to the non-availability of all staff, NCA is unable to complete their corrective actions by providing relevant training to the remaining NCA staff to address the safety deficiencies identified in *Safety Recommendation AIC 23-R20/23-1001*. The AIC also notes that this corrective action will be completed when NCA resumes full operations which is subject to the availability of operational aircraft.

The AIC assigned this response a *satisfactory intent* rating.

The AIC recorded the status of the AIC Recommendation: **CLOSED**



Maryanne J Wal
Chief Commissioner

28 May 2025