



PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION

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Safety Recommendation: AIC 15-R13/15-2019

Addressed to: PNG Air Services Limited

Date issued: 5 August 2015

Investigation link: AIC 15-2019

Action status: Issued

Safety deficiency description

On the morning of 13 April 2015, a Fokker F27 Mk 050 registered P2-TAH and a Bombardier DHC-8 registered P2-MCT both received traffic alert and collision-avoidance system (TCAS) advisory information and took evasive manoeuvring action to avoid each other at 19,000 ft approximately 40 km east of Kerema.

The approach of the two aircraft towards one another at the same altitude was detected, by three different automated systems, one in each aircraft (the traffic alert and collision-avoidance system (TCAS)), and shortly after, one in the air traffic control system (the radar system's short term conflict alert (STCA)). As a result, evasive manoeuvring was carried out by the flight crews and the aircraft continued to their destinations without further incident.

With respect to PNG Air Services Limited the AIC investigation determined that:

- The radar controllers did not effectively cross reference read-backs from the crew of TAH against flight strips and radar information with reference to assigned altitude and did not effectively monitor the flight progress. Despite a number of opportunities to address the error, the controllers did not notice that TAH was not flying at its assigned altitude.
- The *COORD* section of *MATS* is not clear about the requirement for controllers to communicate assigned levels (for aircraft) when communicating between air traffic control units.

Between 00:02:16 and 00:02:32 the approach controller and the en-route radar controller discussed the re-routing of TAH direct to Kerema. An assigned level was not discussed.

MATS RAC-3-2, section 3.5, dated 25 July 2015, states:

When a route clearance is amended before cruising level is reached, the new route and level to be flown shall be specified.

At 00:02:35 the area radar controller re-cleared TAH direct to Kerema, saying:
TAH re-cleared direct Kerema.

TAH had not reached cruising level and the controller did not comply with *MATS RAC-3-2 section 3.5*.

Recommendation number AIC 15-R13/15-2019 to PNG Air Services Limited

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission recommends that PNG Air Services Limited should ensure that in the *COORD* section of the *Manual of Air Traffic Services* the requirement to communicate assigned levels (for aircraft) are communicated between air traffic control units.

Action requested

The AIC requests that PNG Air Services Ltd note recommendation AIC 15-R13/15-2019 above, and provide a response to the AIC within 60 days of the issue date, and explain (including with evidence) how PNG ASL has addressed the safety deficiency identified in the AIC investigation report AIC 15-2019.



DAVID INAU, ML
Chief Executive Officer

PNG Air Services Limited response

Signed response dated 17 August 2015.

In regard to recommendation number AIC 15-R13/15-2019 noted for attention by PNG Air Services Limited, I acknowledge that there appears to have been a failure by the controller to properly apply procedures. This has already been addressed within the ATS Group but I will direct my staff to ensure that the instruction is reiterated in an appropriate manner. I do not agree that the *COORD* section in *MATS* is inadequate in regard to instructions relating to the coordination of levels between ATS positions or units. Throughout the section, there are numerous references to this requirement and I believe that they adequately cover the need to communicate aircraft levels in all circumstances.

PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) assessment of PNG Air Services Limited (ASL) response

The AIC has assessed the ASL response as **unsatisfactory not accepted**. Subsequent to receiving the written response, the AIC met with ASL on 2 September 2015 to discuss the safety concern. ASL maintained its position as stated in its written response.

The AIC has determined that the safety deficiency identified in the recommendation AIC 15-R13/15-2019 will continue to put persons, property or the environment at risk. Due to PNG ASL demonstrating that no action will be taken to reduce or eliminate the identified safety deficiency, the AIC has assigned the following status.

Status of the AIC Recommendation AIC 15-R13/15-2019: CLOSED not accepted



DAVID INAU, ML
Chief Executive Officer

10 October 2015