

MEDIA RELEASE

PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION INVESTIGATING SERIOUS INCIDENT INVOLVING QANTAS LINK AIRCRAFT IN AN INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC), Mr. Hubert Namani today announced that the AIC was investigating a serious incident occurred on 16th March 2020, approximately 40 nautical miles South Port Moresby, NCD.

Mr. Namani said “On 16th March 2020 at 11.20 am local time, the aircraft, a twin-engine Bombardier Dash 8-400 aircraft operated by Sunstate Airlines Pty, Qantas Link flight QLK192D, departed from Jackson’s International Airport, Port Moresby, NCD, with destination to Cairns International Airport, Queensland, Australia.

“According to the information gathered at the initial stages of the investigation, approximately 20 minutes after departure, smoke was detected in the cabin of the aircraft, which led the crew to return to Port Moresby, where the aircraft landed at 11.46 am.

“No injuries nor damage were reported as consequences of this occurrence.”

Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation defines a serious incident as:

An incident involving circumstances indicating that there was a high probability of an accident and associated with the operation of an aircraft which, in the case of a manned aircraft, takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight until such time as all such persons have disembarked, or in the case of an unmanned aircraft, takes place between the time the aircraft is ready to move with the purpose of flight until such time as it comes to rest at the end of the flight and the primary propulsion system is shut down.

Being a signatory State of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*, PNG has an international obligation to comply with *Annex 13* provisions, which include independent and no-blame investigation of serious incidents.

The *Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended)* require these investigations to be conducted by the AIC with complete independence from any other Statutory organisation, to determine the circumstances and causes of accidents and incidents with a view to avoiding similar occurrences in the future, rather than to ascribe blame to any person.

Mr Namani said “the AIC team appointed to conduct this investigation will examine operational, technical, organisational and environmental factors involved in the occurrence, to establish the circumstances in which the occurrence happened. As part of its functions, AIC will also establish and make publicly available *Safety recommendations* to assist avoiding the recurrence of similar events, for the benefit of PNG citizens and for all users of this mean of transport.”

In accordance with International Standards, the AIC will issue a *Preliminary report* within 30 days.