

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION RELEASES PRELIMINARY REPORT ON SERIOUS INCIDENT INVESTIGATION DUE TO FUMES INSIDE THE CABIN ON AN INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC), Mr. Hubert Namani today announced the public release of the Preliminary Report on the investigation regarding the serious incident occurred on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020, involving a DHC-8-402 aircraft owned by Qantas Airways Ltd and operated by Sunstate Airlines (QLD) PTY Ltd, near Port Moresby, National Capital District.

Mr. Namani said “On 16th March 2020 at 1:43 pm, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA PNG) notified the AIC of the serious incident occurred minutes before, involving a Bombardier DHC-8-402 aircraft, registered VH-QOE, owned by Qantas Airways Limited and operated Sunstate Airlines (QLD) PTY Limited, during an international scheduled flight from Jackson’s International Airport, Port Moresby, National Capital District, Papua New Guinea, to Cairns, Queensland, Australia.

“Shortly after departure, the flight crew detected the presence of fumes in the cabin and subsequently returned and landed at Jackson’s International Airport. After landing, the aircraft came to a complete stop in taxiway Foxtrot, where the 4 passengers and 4 crew members exited the aircraft through the main door. No injuries or damage were reported in this occurrence.”

The AIC immediately commenced an investigation and dispatched a team of investigators to perform on-site activities in accordance with the international obligations of *Annex 13* to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* and the national legislative requirements contained in the *Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended)*.

Mr. Namani explained that “the Preliminary Report issued by the AIC in this occurrence has been sent to the appropriate States and to the ICAO in compliance with the international standards of *Annex 13* chapter 7. It has been developed based on factual information gathered at the initial stages of the investigation.”

One aspect of interest is that at early stages of the investigation, AIC determined the source of the fumes that entered the cabin was located in the No. 2 engine compressor bleed air section. This and other relevant information on this occurrence are contained in the Preliminary Report, which has been made publicly available by the AIC in its website [www.aic.gov.pg](http://www.aic.gov.pg)

Mr. Namani said “The investigation is continuing and will include environmental, operational, organisational and technical aspects and other areas as applicable. As in every investigation conducted by the AIC, this investigation is conducted independently from other State organisations, service providers and aviation stakeholders, and its purpose is to determine the circumstances and cause of the serious incident with a view to avoiding similar occurrences in the future, rather than to ascribe blame to any person.”