



## INTERIM STATEMENT

AIC 20-2001

Qantas Airways Limited

VH-QOE

DHC-8-402

In-flight smoke in the cabin

Port Moresby

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

16 March 2020

## About the AIC

The Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) is an independent statutory agency within Papua New Guinea (PNG). The AIC is governed by a Commission and is entirely separate from the judiciary, transport regulators, policy makers and service providers. The AIC's function is to improve safety and public confidence in the aviation mode of transport through excellence in: independent investigation of aviation accidents and other safety occurrences within the aviation system; safety data recording and analysis; and fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The AIC is responsible for investigating accidents and other transport safety matters involving civil aviation in PNG, as well as participating in overseas investigations involving PNG registered aircraft. A primary concern is the safety of commercial transport, with particular regard to fare-paying passenger operations.

The AIC performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the *PNG Civil Aviation Act 2000 (As amended)*, and the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1951*, and in accordance with *Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation*.

The object of a safety investigation is to identify and reduce safety-related risk. AIC investigations determine and communicate the safety factors related to the transport safety matter being investigated.

It is not a function of the AIC to apportion blame or determine liability. At the same time, an investigation report must include relevant factual material of sufficient weight to support the analysis and findings. At all times the AIC endeavours to balance the use of material that could imply adverse comment with the need to properly explain what happened, and why it happened, in a fair and unbiased manner.

As per the *paragraph 6.6 of the International Standards of ICAO Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation*, *if the report cannot be made publicly available within twelve months, the State conducting the investigation shall make an interim statement publicly available on each anniversary of the occurrence, detailing the progress of the investigation and any safety issues raised.*

The AIC has produced this *Interim Statement* in accordance with its mandate under the *Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended)*, in accordance with the requirements of *ICAO Annex 13* and the *PNG Accident Investigation Commission - Policy and Procedures Manual*.

## Interim Statement

On 16 March 2020, at about 11:29 local (1:29 UTC) a Bombardier DHC-8-402 aircraft, registered VH-QOE, owned by Qantas Airways Ltd and operated by Sunstate Airlines (QLD) Pty Ltd on an international scheduled flight from Jackson's International Airport, Port Moresby, National Capital District, Papua New Guinea to Cairns International Airport, Cairns, Queensland, Australia, shortly after its departure, declared an in-flight emergency due to fumes and smoke in the cabin and subsequently returned to Jackson's.

The flight crew conducted a normal approach and landing at Jackson's International Airport. Once landed, the aircraft exited the runway via taxiway Foxtrot where the engines were shut down and a precautionary disembarkation through the main door of the aircraft was performed.

There were four crew and eight passengers on board the aircraft. No injuries to persons nor damage to the aircraft were reported as a result of the occurrence.

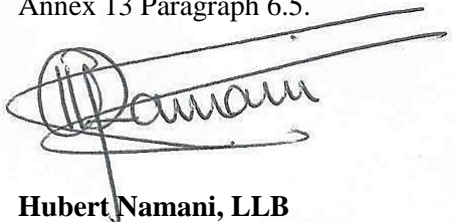
On the same day, at 13:23 local, the AIC was notified by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA PNG) about the occurrence. As per its mandate under the Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended), the AIC immediately commenced a serious incident investigation aligned with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

At the current stage of the investigation all relevant information has been collected, including but not limited to: flight operations, aeronautical personnel information and interviews, aircraft systems, components and airworthiness, survival aspects, weather information, flight recorders, air traffic management and other areas that the AIC determined relevant for safety in this case, to the appropriate extent.

As part of the investigation, a detailed examination of No. 2 engine was conducted by Pratt and Whitney Canada, under the supervision of the Accredited Representative of the Transportation Safety Board of Canada. The results of the detailed examination were provided to the AIC on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021.

All of the information collected during the investigation has been analysed and currently the Draft Final Report is under development by the AIC. Once completed, the Draft Final Report will be sent to the parties in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, Paragraph 6.3, for a 60-day period for comments.

Upon completion of the period for comments, the AIC will release the Final Report in accordance with Annex 13 Paragraph 6.5.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hubert Namani', is written over a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp or watermark.

**Hubert Namani, LLB**

*Chief Commissioner*

16 March 2020