



Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme

FEEDBACK

SEPTEMBER 1994

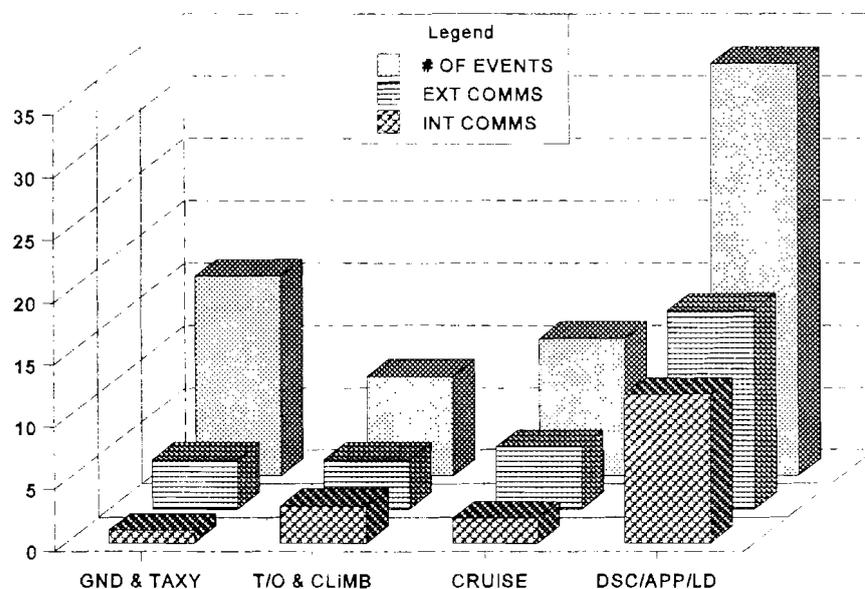
NUMBER 33

After the last FEEDBACK there was a greater response than ever before, with the total number of reports since then being 74. Although a full analysis has not yet been done and we therefore can't present the statistics, the following does show that our reports follow much the same distribution as aircraft accident surveys, for instance in the USA and worldwide.

Looking at our most recent 100 flight deck reports there are some interesting indications. The greatest number of reports, a total of 60, covered problems with interpretation of regulations with the second largest group, 47, consisting of problems from commercial pressure.

Of the 68 events reported from the flight deck, a majority of 33 were on the descent, approach and landing phase. Of these, 15 involved ATC communications, and 12 had elements of communication failure on the flight deck. The next greatest group in this set was during taxiing, startup and ground handling - 16 events. This incident pattern reflects published accident studies.

INCIDENTS ON FLIGHT DECK (68)



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2 TRUE

We had some spirited response to the letter in FEEDBACK NO. 32 from the RAF Inspector of Flight Safety's reply to the Tornado Problem on the general topic of "whose airspace is it anyway!". Below are some snippets that we can publish!

From pilots :

It is a simple deduction that the radar unit is XXXXX [*he was quite wrong!*] Most ex-military pilots, which includes the majority of civil helicopter pilots, know all this. They also know the difference between authorised manoeuvres and those carried out out of sight of authority. This paragraph carries the kernel of the problem. "Air Defence Tornados...often require large volumes of airspace." The civil helicopter industry, over the years, has accepted that the routes to the rigs are in class G airspace. Equally it has recognised that the risk of collision between aircraft on the routes is high. For this reason a rigid structure has been developed and is strictly adhered to. The routes and heights are published, not to reserve the airspace, but to advise other operators of an area of high intensity aerial activity - a policy used by the RAF itself in the Vale of York. The general consensus of opinion is that it is better to hold a steady height and heading with all external lights on and hope that the high-tech on-board sensors (including the mark one eyeball) are serviceable.

* * *

Unless it's changed since he were a lad on Lightnings, fighter pilots with spare fuel always "play" and fit in a quick tailchase on the way home. Perhaps nowadays they diligently practise single-engined flapless circuits instead - but if they thought like that, they would already be part of the "ever-increasing use being made of the open

FIR by commercial carriers". wouldn't they!the Tornado cockpit design obscures aircraft on certain bearings: tailchasing and aerobatics is the only way to keep a proper lookout!

* * *

From controllers :

Your reporter has perceived a problem where all the aircraft are working a unit (apparently the same one!) equipped with radar and it seems very reasonable that the radar should be used to ensure that the aircraft remain at a safe distance from each other.

* * *

A look at a map of UK controlled airspace will clearly show that there are several busy, civilian airports which, at best, have a small "package" of controlled airspace around them and, at worst, none at all. The dimensions of our CTA/CTR are in no way capable of containing the turn radii and vectoring requirements of modern, jet aircraft.(*Maintaining separation is*) Not so easy when you're in IMC, head-down on instruments, and when the radar controller tells you about a Tornado who's just pulled-up out of low-level, about to weld you. Ever tried offering avoiding-action, on radar, Sir, to a slow moving light aircraft, or say, a Shorts 360, lumbering along at 180 knots, about to be "taken-out" by a fast-jet, doing 450 knots, and there's nowhere to turn which won't continue or exacerbate the conflict? It happens EVERY DAY at units like ours, believe me.

* * *

As an ATCO and a pilot I sometimes wonder whether the members of NATMAC are really interested in safety or more in pursuing their own interest. The presence of CAS does not prohibit flight, only advises all what is present.However, all pilots, both civil and military, who use Class G airspace must

recognize that it is their individual responsibility to maintain safe separation from other aircraft. If RAF crews were constantly required to break off their training exercises every time they saw a civil aircraft, the sheer volume of civil traffic now using the open FIR would prevent the RAF from ever completing its essential training.

* * *

I indeed spent 8 years as a military ATCO and so I know something of their thinking processes (or possibly lack of thinking!). I am also confused as to who exactly keeps on resisting airspace changes, particularly the sensible additions of Controlled Airspace.

The proper place to resolve these issues of where controlled airspace should exist is a matter for NATMAC. The "see and be seen" rule is likely to be with us for ever, however we hope to offer some improvements in conspicuity as one result of research being carried out at Farnborough. Reports of incidents gratefully received, but, please, no more comment.

* * * * *

CRM

The following examples, all quite different in detail, illustrate the continuing need for CRM training to be translated into positive action on the flight deck.

My complaint is about Flight Crew who deliberately keep quiet when a fellow crew punches in or selects a different channel and are watching you make a mistake. I am a first officer flying for an Asian Airline, my National Airline and we employ nearly 80% Expatriate crew to operate our aircraft. Previously this airline was set up with crew of Expatriates. These crew are quite upset that locals are coming in and they are all out to see us make mistakes. It's very

unprofessional for these crew to have this kind of attitude and, considering the safety, things will happen if it continues. The Expatriates' way of cockpit management is as though you are flying an aeroplane half aside, touching a knob over his side is not allowed. This kind of flying really jeopardises the safety of the aircraft and the behaviour they have as a crew is not there at all. I just thought that crew teamwork is very important and it must be emphasised regularly.

* * *

CAPTAIN'S DECISION TO CONTINUE TAKE OFF OUTSIDE CROSSWIND LIMITS Heavy showers of rain and snow with associated strong gusting winds had persisted for most of the day. During start, a large shower was obvious to the Northwest, upwind of the airfield. As we backtracked runway 20, the first flurries of snow started falling. Cleared take off on turnround, the Captain advanced the power levers to set take off power. At about 40 kts, ATC warned that the wind had increased and veered from 250/15 kts to 270V290/50 kts. Blowing snow was falling across the runway. I advised the Captain that the wind was out of limits. (The Company limit is less than the manufacturer's limit.) The Captain mumbled and continued with the take off. At 80 kts, ATC again advised of a further increase in windspeed (290/>50 kts). I, again, advised the Captain, he continued. The Captain appeared unaware of the potential dangers of take off into cumulonimbus cloud and strong crosswinds. Take off and departure was turbulent but otherwise successful. The consequences of engine failure near V1 with such a strong crosswind and/or microburst activity could have been much more serious. It is the Captain's decision to abort a take off and I was only in a position to advise. I felt that good airmanship was compromised by an inability to react quickly to changing

conditions and commercial pressure to depart on schedule (although I am sure the passengers would not mind being a few minutes late, to wait for a large shower to pass). POSSIBLE ACTION TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE. It is difficult to allow for every circumstance but crosswinds in these weather conditions are not unusual in Europe. One possibility could be better use of training and recurrent training periods to include adverse weather and decisions to stop on take off.

* * *

On a very short flight at night, in turbulence and with the prospect of a limiting crosswind landing, the aircraft suffered multiple electrical problems. Systems lost included electronic engine control, autothrottle and flap indication (flaps moved OK). The crew workload was very high. On arrival, the engineers found a CB tripped which cured all the faults. The moral is - even when the workload is high, when you have an electrical problem, find time, indeed MAKE time, to check all the CBs.

* * *

Telephone report from helicopter pilot. Commenting on Feedback No.32 "Idiot Rush" and checklists in general. Conflict of SOPs and CHECKLIST reading with CRM. As single pilot operator it does not arise but with the 2 crew helicopters safety is compromised by being unable to do all that is required in the time available. Operating in the North Sea to Oil and Gas Rigs is now using all the limits to the full:- Wx, Load, Fuel, FTL, and paperwork. Some rig loadmasters do not give the information at the right time or in a useable form - order or type of info. load, pax, fuel, route to be flown! The contracts negotiated are unrealistic.

* * * * *

ATC "SHAMBLES"

New summer schedules have hit us with a bang this year, increase in traffic quite dramatic and coupled with introduction of new SIDs at the same time has made the AIR position very busy at peak times. With a continuous flow of outbounds I was working at near capacity for most of the time juggling slots, MDs because of new SIDs, vortex separations plus combinations of different speed aircraft let alone the inbounds. At one point an a/c got airborne when I was sure I hadn't given HIM take-off clearance! No time to query, just sort out the separation problem and still 6 at holding points. Aware I'm "going under" and GMC tries to help with the outbounds by holding some on his frequency. There is no one else to help me with co-ordination or anything else as the contract with the airport only provides 2 controllers AIR and GMC. No supervisor in the Tower, consequently any problem is referred to one of the 2 ATCOs plugged in. Any emergency has to be dealt with by the AIR controller until you can call for help from downstairs! This includes full details passed to Airport Fire Service, PBX, Airfield Operations etc. plus opening up the AFS frequency. Had I had to deal with this as well as the situation of overload that I was in I think, with the best efforts, it would still have been a shambles. We have lost Ground Movement Planning to an ATSA and it is now Clearance Delivery so any start up regulation has to be done by GMC. We are running a busy major airport on a shoe-string and it is crazy!

* * * * *

PLUS ÇA CHANGE

After two cycles leave I return to find the "SIDS" have changed. Due to BS5750 requirements we do NOT now get our own

copy of any "TOI". Subsequently, I find change was made directly into "MATS PART 2". It is a weekend and no copy of the new "SIDS" is available to me, yet I am expected to operate normally!! BS5750 is a really good idea, but it doesn't work in "ATC" in fact it is close to being dangerous. What should I have done:-

1. Gone home and collected copy of SIDS on first weekday?
2. Press on with no knowledge?

P.S. Keep up the good work!!! When CAA gets privatised you'll be needed all the more!

* * * * *

FTL INTERPRETATION

Management have arbitrarily cancelled the scheduling agreement, and enforced flying to the limits of CAP 371, giving in exchange a temporary "wage supplement". This year the Company has been scheduling to the utmost limits of CAP 371, whilst completely ignoring various requirements in our operations manual which the CAA had insisted upon, due to the rather unique nature of our operations. Complaints to the CAA have been ignored, and it appears that our CAA inspectors accept that the Ops. manual may be ignored as long as CAP 371 is obeyed. What is the use of having a CAA approved Ops. manual if the CAA's own employees don't uphold it? Does any other airline have a similar cosy arrangement with its inspectors?!

* * *

I flew 3 early morning flights on the trot reporting before 0659. On the 4th day I was rostered for a late afternoon flight. That morning I was called at 0530 to see if I would come in to fly. I explained I had completed 3 earlies and was told by Operations "I had to call you". Our Base, an

out station, is being run "tightly crewed" as the Company likes to call it, consequently there is seldom a standby pilot. On this occasion a pilot was unable to report so they phoned round until they found someone to fly. A complete disregard of the CAP 371. This was my 7th consecutive day at work. The Company's answer was "If you did not come in we would lose a schedule". As I was up and awake I reported at 0700 for a 0730 departure and everyone was happy, except my wife - she answered the telephone!!!

* * *

After much prodding I had a reply, to my series of letters, from the CAA. I now know who's side they are on and it isn't mine! A very skilled letter which answers few of the questions and does not face any of the issues. I should imagine that in a year or two they will be able to say that as European FTLs work so well and as perhaps the ex-Eastern Bloc airlines have not had an accident for a while, we should move to their FTLs (i.e. none at all). It would simplify the administrative load on the CAA.

* * *

DAY 1

1315 UK-EUROPE-UK 1820

DAY 2

2020 UK-EUROPE-UK 0410 (BUT DIVERTED THEREFORE BACK AT BASE 0830)

DAY 3

0620 UK-EUROPE-UK 1240

DAY 4

0510 UK-EUROPE-UK 1045

On DAY 4 misset altimeter, approach checks only half done due ATC chat, so failed to pick up error until outer marker. Even then non flying pilot didn't pick it up. As it happened, it was a nice day and no harm done. "RW18 QNH 1011". Non flying pilot

said to me, "QNH 1018", and this I set although I had written 1011 myself on the bug card only a few minutes before.

Reason for mistake? Both knackered, due to shift from night to early morning on days 2 and 3. This rostering night then early morning is not illegal but it should be.

All of the FTL problems seem to stem from one general attitude; to apply the rules governing the scheme with no account of the principles identified as necessary in the Foreword and Introduction to CAP371. Perhaps there is merit in restating some of these for the benefit of both Operators and Crews. (the underlines are ours)

"The regulations contained herein set a work pattern for flight crews and cabin staff designed to prevent the onset of fatigue, and yet allow an operator to pursue legitimate business interests.Such actions will not prevent operators from seeking changes to the maxima and minima specified, subject to presentation of a suitable case.In essence, The Air Navigation Order requires that a crew member shall not fly, and an operator shall not require him to fly, if either has reason to believe that he is suffering, or is likely to suffer while flying, from such fatigue as may endanger the safety of the aircraft or of its occupants.they can operate to a satisfactory level of efficiency and safety in all normal and abnormal situations. Planned schedules must allow for flights to be completed within the maximum permitted flying duty period.However, it is recognised that on occasion a planned flight will experience unforeseen delays.avoid such undesirable practices as alternating day/night duties, the positioning of crews so that a serious disruption of established sleep/work patterns occur, or scheduling

**rest periods of between 18 and 36 hours ...
.....planning days off and notifying crews well in advance;... "**

*** * * * ***

HEIGHT OF FASHION

Basically wrong QNH set for approach.
Actual QNH 1016/figure set 1006.

I believed that I had readback 1006 - I was wrong - a study of the ATC tape indicated that 1016 had been passed and readback.

I think that the loss of concentration could be put down to two factors:-

(1) Having people on the flightdeck - on jumpseats watching the approach distracting proper monitoring.

(2) Occurred in MOD/SEV icing - i.e. we were concerned with other things at the time. Problem was noticed just after radio altimeter became active when discrepancy was obvious.

*** * ***

New co-pilot handling (on A/Pilot) flying procedural ILS. My monitoring of him especially close. Established on localizer, he now hand flying a/c, I divert my attention to initiate some checks. I look back and it's going wrong, I offer advice, but he's completely lost the plot. I take over and attempt to stabilize the approach. As I'm about to go around we break cloud and land normally without problem. During the final checks, we missed the QFE and landed QNH - no problem as we were visual from 3 miles out, but apart from questioning my decision, it re-enforces my feeling that QFE landings should be binned once and for all. Two of my colleagues have admitted to altimeter gaffes since. One, (TRE/IRE) landed on limits with the non-handling pilot's altimeter missed by 10mb! in spite of all the checks and calls, they missed it - the last flight of a

series of long multi-sector days and they were tired. Surely it's just one more thing to go wrong.

* * *

"HEIGHT CONFUSION 2" Half an nm SRA - At 4 miles a/c on the "glidepath" for the distance. At 3 miles a couple of hundred feet high so action taken to correct the situation. Then mental alarm bells ring and realise controller now using QFE instead of QNH. Simultaneously come out of cloud to be low on the VASI (but on the centreline!). The a/d elevation is above the decision HEIGHT so continued flight to QFE HEIGHTS on the QNH would result in ground contact - calls, radio altimeter and visual contact notwithstanding. (GPWS would almost certainly not work as configuration and rate of descent normal). Perhaps each phrase should include ALTITUDE or HEIGHT as a preface in the way we use flight level now.

* * *

COMMENT: TRANSITION LEVEL(S)
The TLs in the UK are a real mess: 3000, 4000, 6000 etc. Why not just have one and stop the foreigners accidentally flying on QNH up to 18000ft or vice versa. I suggest 6000ft is good because ATC like it and it keeps everyone in the UK on QNH until above the highest Safety Altitude in the British Isles (5700ft). Alternatively maybe a European/worldwide standard. 18000ft is above all the terrain in Europe and all but one very small area above all the Safety Altitudes as well....

* * *

Reference "HEIGHT CONFUSION" Feedback No. 32. A couple of years ago I wrote to CHIRP about this subject, following an SRA in which we were given advisory HEIGHTS (above aerodrome level) while we were on QNH, hence we were too low. At that time no-one had asked us what we were using. I suppose that things have moved on, since this reporter knew what

datum his customers were using. But really, isn't it time the comparison WAS sorted out? Can't someone out there, e.g. ICAO, DICTATE the datum to be used? Before an accident is caused?

* * *

REFERENCE FB32 (*Reporter of 25 years experience.*) Says that both Height and Altitude on SRA not practical. Also - new point - if ATC do not need to ask pilots to check missed approach height and wheels down on ILS why should they on an SRA - could the chatter not be saved for later!

* * * * *

STERILE ASSUMPTION

The flight was totally routine all the way to the intermediate approach stage. I was flying as P1 (U/S) and just before arriving at the hold I rechecked the ATIS. The wx. was fine: vis >10km, in fact we had been watching lights on the ground from over Europe! We were given a hdg. off the hold and then heard, on being switched to director, an a/c ahead being warned that the vis at the far end of the ldg. R/W was dropping fast. A bank of fog was rolling in over the airfield from the East very quickly. This obviously changed the atmosphere on the flight deck. The vis was dropping rapidly so control was handed back to me and we reverted to standard company low vis procedures (P2 approach for P1 ldg.). We checked again the app. aids, a/c CAT III capability, GA procedure and rebugged for a Flap 40 ldg. (slightly better visual segment at DH). We asked ATC if CAT III protection was available and we're told "not yet, there will be for your ldg." (this was at about 3000' on the G/S). A standard dual channel approach followed with standard calls all the way to DH (50' Radio) Captain's

response "Land". I looked up and as the a/c entered the flare I was mentally congratulating us for such a quick, successful transition to CAT III mode when ATC said "XXX clear land". I replied as we touched down in about 300m vis. After clearing I questioned the Capt if he had been aware we weren't clear to land at DH. He said he was, but had been "mentally expecting" a late hdg. clearance as a) This is often the case and b) We had been asked early to slow to minimum clean speed which led him to believe we were quite close to the preceding a/c. I personally was simply never aware of our ldg. clearance one way or the other as I'd been fully occupied monitoring the autopilot which was valiantly trying to follow the wandering localiser/ glideslope (another clue there!) and I wrongly assumed that we had been cleared when the Capt said land. If the a/c ahead had not cleared the R/W I believe we would never have spotted our error until it was too late. Whilst not suggesting anyone was to blame but ourselves - we should have gone around at DH with no ldg. clearance - perhaps a policy ATC could adopt of actively informing us if a/c are looking uncomfortably close in Low vis conditions would have broken our "false mental picture" of the situation (how's that for CRM speak?) and if by v. short finals the problem is not resolved - send us around. Many thanks for an excellent service.

It is clear that if you are the first to land when a sudden change is made to CAT III operations you are still in a normal landing sequence. There may not be time to get all the sterile area, for radio emissions, cleared of all aircraft, before you are in a position where you must go around. The days of PAR monitoring of ILS approaches are long gone so ATC won't tell you.

* * * * *

CONFLICTING CONFLICT ALERTING

from above

Recently got airborne from XXX following the SID in VMC which took us back overhead climbing under ATC. When passing FL50 noticed another aircraft which had descended through our level visually and had apparently seen us OK, but we didn't see him. ATC knew about it all, and so the collision risk was nil and the situation safe. The TCAS was not selected correctly.

* * *

TCAS gives spurious warning from traffic with transponder but no Mode C. This is a problem especially at weekends. Could Mode C only be used.

* * *

You are correct about the "TRAFFIC" warning and pitch demands for evasive action. However, what would be the case if a light aircraft with no alt readout was conflicting traffic? Remember the SAN DIEGO accident a while ago? A DC9 or 727 I think was downed by a light aircraft. It would also be better to have a visual warning of traffic approaching on the screen, rather than a sudden aural notification followed immediately by a pitch command for evasive action.

Meanwhile down below ...

TCAS - CONTROLLER'S NIGHTMARE?

In the past fortnight I had two conversations as follows:-

1) Me : "Climb to FL390" (Aircraft is on radar heading)

Pilot: "What about the traffic above me?"

Me: "That traffic is seven miles behind, also on a heading and shortly descending."

Should I say "You look out of the window, I'll watch your ass?"

2) Pilot: "I've got traffic on TCAS showing 300 below me"

Me : "That traffic is eight miles to your left, climbing through your level, which is why you're both on headings".

BUT IT HAD TO HAPPEN. Luckily I wasn't working that sector when it did!

Scenario: Very busy. Heavy traffic flow.

Departure on freq. level FL110 towards VOR. Inbound to same VOR on descent for FL120. Inbound given late descent due traffic, so dropping 5000fpm. However, procedural and safe.

Outbound (level FL110) reports TCAS warning "Traffic beneath" (there is no traffic beneath).

"I am climbing".

"Negative" says controller. "There is no traffic below - traffic descending to 1000 above".

"I am climbing" says pilot refusing four times to maintain FL110.

Inbound told to stop descent at FL130, but due rate of descent goes down to FL124 before going back up to FL130. Outbound climbs to FL115 and maintains. Blips merge. Due to quick action by ATCOs involved a potentially serious incident was avoided, caused by pilot following TCAS information which was wrong.

The two examples which I experienced did not involve pilots changing levels as a result of TCAS. But if TCAS is as good as we are led to believe, are pilots misreading information? Or is TCAS failing to read information correctly? Are pilots aware of the disastrous results possible from changing level on a TCAS alert? Controllers are becoming extremely worried about the use of TCAS by some pilots in trying to "Self-ATC". If attempts to do this continue it is more likely to CAUSE a mid-air than PREVENT one.

We TRUST pilots to comply with our clearances. On this we base separation. Pilots, trust US. We do have conflict alert

on our radar too! If more pilots visited the Centre, they might feel less "twitchy"! Controllers are bombarded with information on "Customer Service". Come and see us at work and perhaps you will be enlightened. We'll welcome you.

But back to TCAS. If you DO have a TCAS alert, tell us quickly. We can reassure you, or, if we HAVE got it wrong, remedy the situation for you, working together. Please don't try to "Go it alone" and attempt to provide your own ATC separation. It just doesn't work.

These reports illustrate the concern and confusion that exists in the UK about TCAS. The fundamental problem seems to be that both systems use data derived from the same transponders but use different algorithms to decide on the threat and action required. The chaps who would like to hear from you about all this are:

Captain Tim Sindall at SRG Gatwick and Mr. John Law at CAA House London.

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HELPING WHO?

Funchal is a Category C Restricted Airfield, Training Captains Only. 3 wind readouts are required before an approach can be made. I was making an approach with a variable wing giving a mean of about 8kt tailwind. The indications on final approach from the flight deck, where we have an instantaneous readout, was that we had an 8-10kt tailwind. This is not unusual for Funchal, a windshear toward a head wind component could be expected over the threshold. This did not occur as a result we were several tonnes over MLW for an 8kt tail wind. On departure I questioned the tower as to the touch down wind given: "That's not what the wind sock is showing" I replied.

"06 wind calm", was the response.
"The wind sock is showing a tailwind"
"Oh then 240/01".

I am suspicious that ATC are giving within limit winds to enable aircraft to land. The consequences on a 1500m strip with notorious windshear problems may be quite catastrophic. Who monitors the integrity of the ATC controllers in Funchal, the Hoteliers or the Authorities? Whilst we landed safely, and stopped with a great deal of maximum braking I should have gone around, even from 50ft.

We have all been "caught out" in situations like this, even at places we are familiar with and know the problems. However, there is a more subtle inference to be drawn. In these days of expanding ETOPS have a good look at the briefing sheets for your alternate airfields as well as the destination. There could just be some warnings of nasty traps, even if you're not using Funchal. You probably won't have time to study the sheets if the occasion demands that you use the alternate airfield.

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TRADEOFF

Just a note to concur with the experience of the writer of "Idle Vice Mission Impossible" in Issue No 32, April 1994. There is a definite problem regarding approach into ZRH. Crews with prior experience of ZRH can anticipate the problems, but what about those finding out the hard way for the first time, possibly at night, in IMC with turbulence and icing! Additional factors not mentioned by the writer include

1. Prevailing local winds always seem to give you a tailwind on descent and approach.

2. Having got you "high + fast" the controllers often give vectors to the LLZ which "cut the corner", giving the crew far fewer track miles to touchdown than expected.

3. The speed reduction to 250kt at FL100 can be a problem. Modern aircraft have extreme trouble in going down and slowing down at the same time. If ATC has kept you high the last thing you want to do is slow to 250kt at FL100. The descent gradient at 250kt is shallow anyway, but in icing conditions when the engines need to be spooled up the descent rate becomes minimal!

To conclude, the approach procedures at ZRH are not pilot or passenger friendly. That ZRH is "not exactly noted for its safety record" is no coincidence. Approaches into ZRH routinely require exploration of the margins of the aircraft's operational limits and capabilities. THE SAFETY MARGIN AT ZRH IS UNNECESSARILY COMPROMISED AS THINGS PRESENTLY STAND.

AND AGAIN

I don't have a specific incident to report, but I would just like to say that I fully agree with the sentiments expressed in Feedback No32 under the title "Idle Vice - Mission Impossible?" As a relatively infrequent visitor into ZRH I can think of at least 3 occasions where ATC have apparently done their best to "sucker" us into unnecessarily fast approaches from above the glide-path. I am not at all impressed with ATC for arriving aircraft there.

AND AGAIN

Can I be permitted to endorse the comments made in "Idle Vice Mission Impossible".

Zurich A.T.C. consistently puts aircraft in an impossible position time and time again, this place is an accident waiting to happen. Almost any flight into ZRH on Rw 14/16- i.e. all flts are affected!

The general point the reporter makes about the difficulty of concurrently reducing speed and increasing the rate of descent is one that seems not to be appreciated by some controllers who may be under just as much pressure to "fit more aircraft in". The following from a reporter based at ZRH makes a good final point.

AND FINALLY

I am glad that ZRH is my home base, as familiarity does help! This is particularly true when doing a VOR/DME approach to Runway 28 which is only used in extreme weather conditions thereby being one of the most demanding approaches I know anywhere and definitely not recommended for someone unfamiliar with ZRH and its extreme west wind conditions. The turbulence is seldom less than moderate, the visibility can be poor, the ceiling low and the runway wet!

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CREWED ATTEMPT

Sometimes CHIRP has been accused of fabricating reports to make points. We never have but if we did this is probably the sort of thing we'd write!

As a pilot I am increasingly concerned at the isolation of cabin staff within our airline(s). I am totally convinced that they should be included in the CHIRP scheme, for their and all our sakes.

They are supposed to be protected by FTL schemes yet crewing departments do lean on them. What pilot would expect a call after 11 pm asking them to leave home at 4.45 am next day to report for an early start? With minutes to departure time Cabin Staff should not have to offload excessive "hand" baggage. The frame used by some airlines should be approved for universal use, and their use be enforced. Some of the lockers are grossly overloaded and the floor areas frequently littered with bulky items. As a final example, short turn around times mean they never rest, rarely relax, are increasingly fatigued and as a result become less alert and are more easily manipulated. Security and Safety, WORDS we hear a lot of in aviation, must be compromised as a consequence. Checks are rushed, and rules overlooked.

Give them a voice! And while you are about it consider the engineers too.

* * * * *

A LOAD ON THEIR MIND?

This flight was almost exclusively for divers going to various locations. Two-thirds of the passengers were male and the checked baggage wt. was greater than normal. Planned TOW was 100kg less than MTOW. However, as soon as we got airborne, it was obvious from several performance parameters that we were considerably heavier than intended. By TOC we calculated that we were about 5% overweight and this seemed to be confirmed throughout the flight.

I questioned the cabin staff and they said that

there probably wasn't any male on board that weighed only 75kg. Furthermore, they said that some hand luggage was so heavy that they couldn't lift the bags into the overhead lockers.

Later I discovered that some hand luggage weighed 20kg (mostly diving kit) and it is common practice for divers to put the heaviest items in their hand luggage to avoid excess baggage charges.

Assumed weights for pax are about to be changed but these are not going to come near the larger pax and their handbaggage. When some of the diving fraternity check in they do not offer their heavy equipment for the hold. This can provide problems for airliners and helicopters.

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S T R E S S CALCULATIONS

I am quite alarmed by the number of good people that I talk to around the world; who when in their cups, confide to serious self doubt/stress problems. Most - like myself - can backtrack to some incident in their flying career which was traumatic. There are countless incidents, some recorded, some not; but it seems to me that the CAA ignore the potential mental health problems that are sometimes inflicted upon pilots (ATC controllers?) and so long as an individual passes an ECG etc. etc. then all is well. I can tell you that it is not. It would help, if any incident, i.e. Airmiss/Major incident, was automatically required to be followed up by a visit to a doctor trained in stress counselling. We are a secretive introspective bunch, probably chosen for those qualities,

but at times we all need help.

The "how and when" of stress and the symptoms produced are very personal. The view of this reporter is not supported by the CAA and there already exist the trained counsellors of BALPA. Psychological symptoms as well as physiological symptoms are the concern of the AME, who is in the business of keeping the pilot flying.

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STOP PRESS

From Commandant, R.A.F. School of Aviation Medicine, Farnborough

I am sure that all readers of FEEDBACK are aware that CHIRP is under review. When I was appointed the Chairman of the CHIRP Liaison Group I felt that the time had come for a good look at its future, and this could best be done by the Master and Immediate Past Master of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators. I was delighted when Chris Hodgkinson and Clive Elton agreed to carry out the task, and I am pleased to inform the readership that their report arrived on my desk a few days ago.

The report has been sent to the Members of the CHIRP Liaison Group and a meeting is scheduled for November, when Chris Hodgkinson and Clive Elton will introduce their review. They have consulted widely, and I am sure that their report will provide the basis of future confidential reporting in the United Kingdom. Naturally, you will be informed of the outcome of this initiative.

Tony Nicholson

Dateline: 20th September 1994