



SPECIAL INCIDENT - INVESTIGATION REPORT



**STOWAWAY CASE ON A PIA FLIGHT
FROM JEDDAH TO KARACHI ON 10-02-06
AIRBUS-310 AP-BGP PK-3356**

**STOWAWAY CASE: DEAD BODY FOUND IN MAIN LANDING
GEAR OF PIA FLIGHT PK-3356 REG NO. AP-BGP
DATED 10 FEB 2006 (JEDDAH-KARACHI)**

AUTHORITY: Investigation Order Memorandum signed by Director General Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority vide HQCAA/1901/305/SIB dated 13 Feb 2006, amended by corrigendum dated 28th February 2006.

SYNOPSIS:

While, PK-3356, a Haj Flight from Jeddah to Karachi was holding at Jeddah runway 34; suddenly a person, ran from apron area around and climbed into the main landing gear bay. A Royal Saudi Airline (RSA) pilot witnessed this incident; and immediately reported the matter to ATC Tower, which after some reconfirmations and inquiries; informed PIA Captain regarding the presence of a person in his aircraft's Main Landing Gear (MLG). PIA captain reconfirmed the contents of the message from ATC. Four minutes later, ATC inquired from the Captain whether he would land back or continue. The pilot in turn requested air traffic controller for advice for which he was told to take his own decision. The pilot decided to continue to Karachi. He at no stage of 4 hrs flight informed Pakistan Air Traffic Control (ATC) regarding the potential hazardous situation. On landing, when aircraft was searched, a frozen body was found in the left main wheel well.

1. FACTUAL INFORMATION:

1.1 TRANSCRIPT BETWEEN – ATC JEDDAH AND PIA 3356

The Communication between PIA aircrew and Air Traffic Services (ATC) Jeddah from start of the aircraft till 200 NM from Jeddah were obtained from Saudi authorities. The communication was reconfirmed in the presence of relevant ATC officers present on the day of occurrence. The transcript is attached as Appendix 'C'.

The analysis of communication is reproduced here to show the times when important messages were exchange:

- (a) At 10:34 15 – PIA is cleared for take off.
- (b) At 10:40:40 RSAL pilot informs ATC Tower Jeddah regarding his eyewitness account of someone climbing in the PIA aircraft before take off.
- (c) At 10:47:38 Captain of PIA was advised by ATC Jeddah that one person has entered the airplane from Landing Gears.
- (d) At 10:49:38 PIA Captain asked ATC Jeddah for **advice** as **what to do?**
- (e) At 10:50:44 ATC Jeddah clarified to PIA Captain that it is you who has to decide whether to continue or land back.
- (f) At 10:51:00 PIA Captain decided to continue.
- (g) At 11:02:10 Jeddah ACC asked PIA Captain to confirm whether any one of its staff left the airplane and went back while the aircraft was holding for take off.

1.2 RADAR PICTURE FOR JEDDAH APPROACH CONTROL

The radar pictures attached as Appendix 'D' explains different stages of the PIA aircraft with reference to **time, distance and flight levels** from Jeddah after take-off at which important conversation between ATC Jeddah and PIA Captain took place. It may be noted that the watches of Air Traffic Control Approach Radars and Air Traffic Communication Computer recordings are not synchronized. Hence there is a difference between time locked on Radar Exhibits i.e. D1-D5 and ATC transcript i.e.

Exhibit 'C'. However the time difference is not more than few seconds and the duration or gap between events is the same:

- (a) At 10:36:08, the plane has taken off from the runway and is still with Tower.
- (b) At 10:40:37; when a/c is within 20 NM and at flight level 10300, the eyewitness and tower are exchanging information regarding presence of a person in landing gear. The process of confirmation takes two minutes.
- (c) At 10:44:19 when PIA aircraft is approximate 42 NM (each circle exponent 20 NM) and at 17300 feet altitude; the tower (ATC) contacts approach (ATC) to pass the information. As at this stage PIA aircraft is not with the ATC tower but with approach control; hence ATC Tower has to pass the information received from an eyewitness to approach control. There is again confirmation through queries process between tower and approach.
- (d) At 10:47:36 when PIA aircraft is around 70NM and at 23400 feet high, the approach control inform the Captain that a man has entered in MLG prior to take off.
- (e) PIA aircrew confirms and reconfirms the presence of a person in Landing Gears, and after 3 minutes of discussion at 10:50:51 finally decides to continue to Karachi. At this time the aircraft was about 95 N.M at F.L 292.
- (f) On this decision, the Saudi ATCO is worried as it is an unexpected decision for them. Earlier, the Captain (PIA) asked from ATC "ADVISE US WHAT TO DO AFTER THIS" on which they were told that "It is your decision Sir if you would like to return back or to continue fly."

2. ANALYSIS:

2.1 THE OCCURRENCE:

PK-3356 was a routine Hajj Flight from Jeddah to Karachi. PIA was parked at Apron 6 and was given normal taxi via TWYE, TWYR and TWYB for line up at 34 L (Appendix 'B'). It took-off without any problem. While the aircraft was short of runway for line up, a Saudi pilot who was traveling in a transport as shown in Appendix 'B', observed/saw a person wearing casual clothes running from Apron 5 and climbing in one of the main landing gear bay. The Saudi Captain tried to gain PIA Captain's attention by waving but did not succeed. Aircraft was given take off, the Saudi Pilot stood at the place and waited for gears to be raised and locked with an intention to observe whether the person may fall during take-off. Saudi Captain immediately informed Jeddah tower. After confirmation which took approximately 07 minutes, they informed PIA Captain regarding the presence of a person in MLG. The communication transcript between ATC Jeddah and PIA Captain is very clear about the presence of a person in the MLG. At this time the aircraft was approximately 70 NM away from Jeddah airport and climbing through 23400 feet. After about 3 minutes of discussion, the Captain asked Jeddah ATC as to what should they do; to which the Jeddah ATC replied that it is your discretion to return back or to continue as per existing procedure. The Captain of PIA decided to continue. It appeared from the R/T communication which took place between PIA Captain and ATC Jeddah that the ATCO was surprised to hear the Captain's decision to proceed to Karachi. At this time, the aircraft was approximately 95 NM away at flight level 292.

While the PK-3356 was on way, Jeddah authorities informed PIA Station Manager, Mr. Shehnaz Sheikh, who immediately informed PIA flight control Karachi. Jeddah ATC also informed ACC of

Muscat and Bahrain of the event. However, en route ACC did not inform Karachi. The air crew also did not inform the ATS en-route.

Jeddah ATC also inquired from PIA Captain whether someone from the aircrew left A/C from landing gear and returned back. This was actually a query which was raised by someone on ground during discussion.

2.2 ROLE OF AIRCREW:

The aircrew, states that when they were climbing out of FL-270 for FL-330 and 200 NM out of Jeddah, they received the first call from Jeddah ATC. They did not mention any communication which took place when a/c was at 70 NM and at 95 NM when the presence of the stowaway was confirmed without any doubt and decision to continue to Karachi by captain was communicated to Jeddah respectively, thus concealing the facts from investigation board.

The aircrew also stated the crucial messages received from Jeddah ATC regarding stowaway case; by adding the words "May" and "suspected"; where as Jeddah ATC message was absolutely clear, unambiguous and was confirmed by aircrew.

2.3 AIRCREW DECISION TO CONTINUE FLIGHT TO KARACHI:

Analysis of the aircrew statement clearly indicate that the aircrew decision to continue was based on their perception that the security arrangement at Jeddah were so fool proof that it would have been impossible for any person to get into the landing gear during taxi and that the Saudi message was not clear, which was wrong. In fact the aircrew disregarded the message received from ATS and acted on assumptions which is contradictory to the existing procedures.

As a standard practice the aircrew should act on the information received by Air Traffic Services rather than taking decision on their assumption.

3. **OBSERVATIONS:**

- 3.1 PIA flight control, on receiving information from Station Manager, Jeddah and Captain of PK-3356, should have informed ATC (PAK) so that the aircraft could have been parked away from the normal parking as a safety precaution.

4. **FINDINGS:**

- 4.1 Saudi authorities (ATS) acted promptly and correctly.
- 4.2 The man climbed through the MLG by by-passing the security arrangements at Jeddah Airfield which was a security lapse.
- 4.3 The aircrew concealed the facts and did not give the complete picture to SIB.
- 4.4 The aircrew decision to continue the flight to Karachi was incorrect thus compromising the safety of aircraft and passengers.
- 4.5 The aircrew did not inform the ATS en-route and destination regarding the situation well in time.
- 4.6 CAA ATS were not informed by respective FIRs regarding the stowaway case.

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 5.1 PIA (Flight Operation) to take appropriate administrative action against the aircrew for concealing the facts and taking incorrect decision.
- 5.2 PIA (Flight Control) in addition to informing agencies such as Corporate Safety, Security, Flight Operation, must also inform ATC regarding such aircraft so that it is parked separately and away from other aircraft in accordance with ATC procedures.
- 5.3 Director Operations to look into the existing procedures as to why FIR enroute did not inform ATS Pakistan.