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### **1 AAIB RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING TWO SERIOUS INCIDENTS INVOLVING BRITISH REGISTERED AIRCRAFT UNDERTAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT FLIGHTS: ONE RELATING TO STROBE LIGHTS, THE OTHER RELATING TO OXYGEN MASKS SELECTED TO 100%**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 Following two separate serious incidents involving British registered aircraft undertaking public transport flights, the Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) of the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions made recommendations to the CAA. This FODCOM highlights two of the recommendations and notifies actions which should be taken by operators, where appropriate.

#### **1.2 Strobe Lights**

- 1.2.1 The first incident occurred at London Heathrow Airport when Runway 09 Right (09R) was being used for take-off and Runway 09 Left (09L) was being used for landing. There was also a local procedure whereby aircraft could land on Runway 09R if traffic conditions allowed. A number of aircraft had been given conditional line-up clearance for Runway 09R and an arriving aircraft was approaching for a landing on Runway 09R.

- 1.2.2 With one aircraft still on the runway for take-off, the approaching aircraft was instructed to go-around at a late stage. During this procedure, the aircraft performing the go-around descended to 118 feet radar altitude above the runway; the aircraft on the runway for departure had a tail fin height of 38 feet 7 inches.

- 1.2.3 As a result of their investigation the AAIB made a number of recommendations including the following:-

The Civil Aviation Authority should issue instructions requiring United Kingdom Registered aircraft to use strobe lights, if fitted, when on an active runway in the UK.

- 1.2.4 The CAA has accepted this recommendation. Initial investigations show that many operators already use their strobe lights in such circumstances. In addition, the CAA feels that the recommendation should apply to all runways, not just those in the UK.

- 1.2.5 **You should review your operating procedures and amend your Operations Manual as necessary to include instructions that, if fitted, strobe lights should be used when on an active runway prior to take-off or after landing.**

#### **1.3 Oxygen Masks**

- 1.3.1 The second incident involved an aircraft in which two passengers noticed an "oily petrol" smell. In addition, a positioning company cabin crew member had also reported a similar smell.

- 1.3.2 The aircraft commander asked the senior cabin attendant to go to the rear of the passenger cabin to check the situation. She did so and reported that she could detect nothing unusual. The commander then instructed her to advise him if there were any further indications.

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- 1.3.3 However, later in the flight, both pilots began to feel ill. The commander noticed that the first officer's face was white and that his pupils appeared highly dilated.
- 1.3.4 The commander took the handling duties, instructed the first officer to put on his oxygen mask and called the senior cabin attendant to the flight deck. The commander instructed her to check the flight deck regularly during the descent and approach. Thereafter, the first officer took no part in the conduct of the flight although he was able to nod in response to the commander's questions.
- 1.3.5 By this stage, the aircraft was at FL70 and positioning for an ILS approach. Although the commander began feeling progressively worse, he was able to continue the approach and landing.
- 1.3.6 Following their investigation the AAIB made a number of recommendations including the following:-
- The Civil Aviation Authority should consider issuing additional advice to the crews of jet transport aircraft on the best operational practice when there is a suspicion of flight deck or cabin air contamination. The advice should include the necessity for all flight crew to use oxygen masks selected to 100% and the importance of cabin crew taking an active part in monitoring the flight crew in such circumstances.
- 1.3.7 **FODCOM 17/2000, dated 28 December 2000, contains advice on incapacitation procedures. Operators are further reminded that Operations Manual procedures should contain detailed instructions to crews on such procedures. These should at least include the necessity to use oxygen masks at 100% whenever contamination is present or suspected and the need to establish communications by the appropriate switch selections. Additionally, cabin crew procedures should include monitoring of the flight deck. However, this should not be to the detriment of other emergency procedures such as dealing with cabin smoke or fires, especially where only one cabin crew member is carried.**
- 1.3.8 **Operators should also ensure that incapacitation procedures are regularly practised during recurrent training and that case based studies are discussed at joint flight deck/cabin crews safety training.**

## 2 CAP 712 SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR COMMERCIAL AIR TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

- 2.1 The above mentioned document is the product of the joint Air Transport Operators/SRG working group and provides practical guidance on the development and implementations of Safety Management Systems in airline and maintenance organisations.
- 2.2 CAP 712 can be purchased for £10.00 per copy from Documedia Ltd, 37 Windsor Street, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 2DG. Telephone 0870 887 1410. Fax 0870 887 1411.

It is also available on the CAA website:

[http://www.srg.caa.co.uk/publications/cap712\\_sms\\_for\\_commercial\\_air\\_transport\\_operations.pdf](http://www.srg.caa.co.uk/publications/cap712_sms_for_commercial_air_transport_operations.pdf)

Captain D J Chapman  
Head Flight Operations Department  
24 August 2001

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