



**NINTH MEETING OF THE ASIA PACIFIC ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION
GROUP (APAC-AIG/9)**

(27-28 October 2021 on Virtual Platform at 11.00 hrs. Bangkok Time UTC+7)

Agenda Item 4: Enhancing Accident Investigation Capabilities

**ACCIDENT TO M/S AIR INDIA EXPRESS BOEING 737-800
AIRCRAFT VT-AXH AT KOZHIKODE, INDIA ON 07.08.2020**

(Presented by India)

SUMMARY

Air India Express aircraft VT-AXH was involved in an accident while landing at Kozhikode Airport. The aircraft after making a delayed touchdown overshot the runway and then slid down the slope of the table top runway. 21 people including cockpit crew received fatal injuries and 76 people received serious injuries in the accident.

AAIB, India ordered an Annex 13 investigation into the causes of the accident and appointed a 5-member Investigation team comprising Senior Pilot, Engineers, Aviation Medicine specialist, Aerodrome expert, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 After Covid-19 related restrictions were eased, Air India Express Limited resumed operations in May 2020. Flight AXB 1343/1344 was planned to operate on Kozhikode-Dubai-Kozhikode sector under Vande Bharat Mission.

1.2 Kozhikode Airport is located in Mallapuram district of Kerala and is one of the six **Table Top Runways** in the country (Other being Lingpui, Kannur, Mangalore, Pakyong and Shimla).

1.3 The flight was under command of an ATPL holder PIC and who was assisted by a CPL holder Co-pilot in the cockpit and 04 cabin crew. There were 184 passengers on the flight.

1.4 Scheduled Departure of Flight AXB 1344 from Dubai was at 0930 UTC but it got delayed and departed at 1000 UTC. Aircraft came in contact of Kozhikode ATC at 1903 IST.

1.5 Being in the midst of monsoon season, the airport was experiencing continuous rain and overcast sky. Visibility ranged from 1500 m to 2000 m and aerodrome warning for thunderstorm and rain was issued by IMD which was valid up to 1645 IST.

1.6 Owing to the wind direction, the Runway 28 was in use.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Aircraft was cleared for landing on **Runway 28 (from east side over land)** by the Kozhikode ATC. While on approach for Runway 28, the pilots were able to sight the Airport lead-in lights at 1921 IST. **Immediately thereafter, the windshield wiper on PIC side stopped functioning.**

- 2.2 Aircraft descended till Decision Height but pilots could not sight the Runway and carried out a go-around.
- 2.3 DGCA regulations and Airlines SOP do not permit landing in rains with windshield wiper unserviceable.
- 2.4 Meanwhile on ground, Delhi bound Air India flight AIC425 was getting ready for departure. AIC425 requested permission from ATC to take-off from **Runway 10** in place of Runway 28 (which was in use at that time). ATC permitted AIC425 for use of Runway 10 and also enquired from AXB1344 if it would also like to attempt landing on Runway 10.
- 2.5 After enquiring about weather and visibility, AXB1344 now confirmed its preference for Runway 10 and started preparation for Landing on Runway 10. Landing distance available at Kozhikode was **8858 feet**.
- 2.6 Crew were indecisive about selection of Landing Flaps and late into the approach, selected Flaps 30. Crew disengaged Autopilot at about 500 feet altitude but Autothrottle was not disengaged.
- 2.7 The approach became un-stabilised but PIC continued with the approach.
- 2.8 Co-pilot drew attention of PIC to RoD but did not call for Go-around. Power was added to arrest the RoD and aircraft Pitch was increased. The aircraft, however, overcorrected.
- 2.9 It was at 92 feet RA as it approached the threshold. As aircraft floated above the runway for nearly 10 seconds, Co-pilot again tried to draw attention of PIC with a non-standard call, but PIC continued with the landing.
- 2.10 Just before touchdown, Co-pilot gave a Go-around call, but the same was also ignored by PIC.
- 2.11 After touchdown, Manual Brakes were applied and Thrust Reversers deployed, **but crew possibly thought of go-around and released brake and stowed the Thrust Reversers**. In state of indecisiveness and confusion, crew again applied brakes and deployed Thrust Reversers (**for the second time**) before stowing the Thrust Reversers again in the end.
- 2.12 Repeated deployment and stowing of Thrust Reverser did not aid in braking but rather contributed to accelerating the aircraft.
- 2.13 The aircraft overshot the Runway and fell down the tabletop.
- 2.14 The investigation into the accident has been summarized into 57 findings.
- 2.15 The report also has highlighted 15 contributory factors.
- 2.16 The cause of accident as per the Investigation report was “Non adherence to SOP by the PF, wherein, he continued an unstabilized approach and landed beyond the touchdown zone, half way down the runway, inspite of ‘Go-Around’ call by PM which warranted a mandatory ‘Go-Around and the failure of PM to take over controls and execute a Go Around.”
- 2.17 43 Safety Recommendations have been given to address various Systemic and Safety deficiencies.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

- 3.1 The Meeting may note the information given in this paper.

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