

No. 3

Campaña de Aviación Faucett S. A. , DC-3, OB-PBH-530 accident 17 km northeast of the Tingo María District, Peru, 4 February 1962. Report released by the Director of Civil Aviation, Peru.

1. Historical1.1 Circumstances

The aircraft was on a scheduled domestic flight between the towns of Huánuco and Pucallpa with 3 crew members and 15 passengers aboard. The aircraft, which was flying at a height of 15 000 ft was operating normally up to 0955 hours local time at which time the pilot reported by radio that the aircraft was returning to Huánuco because of bad weather. There was no further communication from the aircraft. Eye-witnesses reported that the aircraft was seen "falling and revolving in its descent" and they also stated they heard the noise of the engines "accelerating in a burst of power" just before the aircraft struck the ground near the base of a hill. The time of the accident was approximately 1005 hours local time.

1.2 Damage to aircraft

The aircraft was completely destroyed by the force of the impact and the resultant fire.

1.3 Injuries to persons

All 3 crew members and 15 passengers aboard the aircraft lost their lives in the accident.

2. Facts ascertained by the Inquiry2.1 Aircraft information

N/A

2.2 Crew information

N/A

2.3 Weather information

An overcast cloud condition existed in the area at the time of the accident, and it was presumed that the pilot was flying on instruments when he transmitted that he was returning to Huánuco because of the weather conditions and that he intended to gain altitude, make for Uchizo and then head for Huánuco.

2.4 Navigational aids

N/A

## 2.5 Communications

N/A

## 2.6 Aerodrome installations

N/A

## 2.7 Fire

There were no signs of a pre-impact fire. Fire broke out following impact.

## 2.8 Wreckage

The wreckage was found on the slope of a hill approximately 150 m high, and the point of impact was 50 m from the hill base. The main wreckage was located within a radius of 20 m of the point of impact. A study of the wreckage and the ground marks showed that the aircraft had struck the ground at high speed and that the fuel tanks had exploded on impact. The forward part of the fuselage had disintegrated completely as a result of the impact and fire. The port elevator was missing from the badly damaged tail unit which was still attached to the rear fuselage. The port elevator was found later on a hill 2 km from the accident site. There was no evidence of the aircraft coming into contact with any point other than the main impact site.

## 3. Comments, findings and recommendations

### 3.1 Discussion of the evidence and conclusions

At no time did the pilot report any emergency situation or failure of any sort. It is possible that, because of the turbulent conditions at the height the aircraft was flying, the pilot lost control of the aircraft in cloud and that the aircraft went into a spin from which the pilot could not recover after making visual contact with the ground. The noise of the engines heard by the witnesses just before the aircraft struck the ground could have been caused by the application of maximum engine power. Examination of the propellers revealed that these were turning in minimum pitch (high rpm) at the time of impact.

Detailed examination showed no evidence that the aircraft might have been struck by lightning.

There are three possible causes that would account for the port elevator being found away from the site of the accident and its immediate vicinity:

- a) Separation before the aircraft began to fall causing loss or diminution of control resulting in the aircraft going into a spin;
- b) Separation during the fall resulting from the application of aerodynamic loads beyond design limits;
- c) Separation on impact, and the subsequent theft of the separated unit by persons who reached the scene immediately after, or during the 28 hours that elapsed from the time of the accident to the time of examination of the wreckage.

Examination of the elevator and the damage it had sustained established facts which on analysis led to the conclusions that:

- a) The port elevator became detached from the aircraft in flight causing such loss of control that it was impossible for the pilot to level off in time.
- b) To determine the cause of the failure, a more exhaustive examination of the affected units would be necessary to determine whether this was due to material fatigue, maintenance, or structural deficiency.

### 3.2 Probable cause

For undetermined reasons, the port elevator separated from the aircraft in flight.

### 3.3 Recommendations

No recommendations are made in the report.

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