



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA	Accident Number:	DCA88MA008
Date & Time:	12/07/1987, 1616 PST	Registration:	N350PS
Aircraft:	BRITISH AEROSPACE BAE-146-200	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	43 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 121: Air Carrier - Scheduled		

Analysis

A RECENTLY DISCHARGED USAIR EMPLOYEE BOARDED PSA FLT 1771 AFTER HAVING LEFT A GOODBYE MESSAGE WITH FRIENDS. HE BYPASSED SECURITY AND CARRIED A BORROWED .44 CALIBER PISTOL. A NOTE WRITTEN BY THIS PSGR, FOUND IN THE WRECKAGE, THREATENED HIS FORMER SUPERVISOR AT USAIR, WHO WAS ABOARD THE FLT. AT 1613, THE PLT RPTD TO OAKLAND ARTCC THAT HE HAD AN EMERGENCY AND THAT GUNSHOTS HAD BEEN FIRED IN THE AIRPLANE. WITHIN 25 SECONDS, OAKLAND CTR CONTROLLERS OBSERVED THAT PSA 1771 HAD BEGUN A RAPID DESCENT FM WHICH IT DID NOT RECOVER. WITNESSES ON THE GND SAID THE AIRPLANE WAS INTACT AND THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF FIRE BEFORE THE AIRPLANE STRUCK THE GND IN A STEEP NOSE-DOWN ATTITUDE. THE CVR TAPE REVEALED THE SOUNDS OF A SCUFFLE AND SEVERAL SHOTS WHICH WERE APPARENTLY FIRED IN OR NEAR THE COCKPIT. THE PISTOL WAS FOUND IN THE WRECKAGE WITH 6 EXPENDED ROUNDS. FAA RULES PERMITTED AIRLINE EMPLOYEES TO BYPASS SECURITY CHECKPOINTS.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (F) SECURITY - INADEQUATE - COMPANY/OPERATOR MANAGEMENT
2. (F) PROCEDURE INADEQUATE - COMPANY/OPERATOR MANAGEMENT
3. (F) INSUFF STANDARDS/REQUIREMENTS, OPERATION/OPERATOR - FAA(ORGANIZATION)
4. (C) CONTROL INTERFERENCE - INTENTIONAL - PASSENGER
5. (C) SABOTAGE - INTENTIONAL - PASSENGER
6. (C) EMOTIONAL REACTION - PASSENGER
7. INCAPACITATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
8. INCAPACITATION - COPILOT/SECOND PILOT
9. SUICIDE - INTENTIONAL - PASSENGER

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	44, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	10/13/1987
Occupational Pilot:	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:		
Flight Time:	11600 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1600 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BRITISH AEROSPACE	Registration:	N350PS
Model/Series:	BAE-146-200 BAE-146-20	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	E2027
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	83
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Continuous Airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	89500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	40 Hours	Engines:	4 Turbo Fan
Airframe Total Time:	8571 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	ALF 502-R3
Registered Owner:	PACIFIC SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	Rated Power:	6700 lbs
Operator:	PACIFIC SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Flag carrier (121)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	PSAA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LAX, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1600 PST	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	50 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	330°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	13° C / 6° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	LOS ANGELES, CA (LAX)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	SAN FRANCISCO, CA (SFO)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	1530 PST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	5 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	38 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	On-Ground
Total Injuries:	43 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	KEN ENSSLIN	Report Date:	01/04/1989
Additional Participating Persons:	T. BORSON P. BAKER B. DICKENS A. J HYLTON		
Publish Date:			
Investigation Docket:	NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinquiry@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).