

No. 12

Canadian Pacific Air Lines Limited, Douglas C-54A-DC,
CF-CPC aircraft, missing between Vancouver, B.C. and
Anchorage, Alaska en route from Vancouver, B.C. to
Tokyo, Japan on 21 July 1951. Dept. of Transport,
Air Services Branch, Civil Aviation Division
Serial No. 51-35

Circumstances

At 1853 hours on 21 July the aircraft took off from Vancouver, B.C., on a scheduled flight with a crew of six and thirty-one passengers. The aircraft proceeded on schedule, the last position report being given at Cape Spencer intersection, B.C. The last position report gave the ETA Yakutat, Alaska as 2400 hours. No further communication was received. At 0044 hour an emergency warning was issued. When the aircraft became overdue a search was undertaken by the U.S.A.F. assisted by the R.C.A.F. which lasted until 31 October, 1951. No trace of the aircraft or its occupants has been found.

Investigation and Evidence

Records show the aircraft to have been serviceable for flight. No written confirmation could be obtained to certify its airworthiness as the log books containing this certification were on board the aircraft. Sufficient fuel was on board for the flight and the aircraft was loaded in conformity with the Certificate of Airworthiness.

The pilot-in-command and two other crew members were given a MET briefing for the route Vancouver, B.C. - Elmendorf Field, Alaska. Nothing unusual in the weather was expected. The main feature was a depression in the Western Gulf of Alaska with an occlusion moving Northeast at 25 mph to about 150-200 miles offshore from Cape Spencer - Yakataga. Freezing level was forecast at 9000 ft for the segment of the route between Cape Spencer and Yakataga. Severe icing was not expected.

The flight was normal to Sitka. The captain was unable to contact Sitka and so he gave the position report through Yakutat. According to a report from another pilot, who was flying in the area, radio conditions were poor and the Yakutat beam was swinging considerably at the time of the disappearance. A check of this beam later showed that it was in its normal position.

Probable Cause

As no trace of the aircraft or its occupants has been found to date the cause of the disappearance has not been determined.