



Preliminary Report

Airbus A350-941

B-LRR

21 February 2019

Flight Crew Incapacitation



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General details

Occurrence details

Date and time:	21 February 2019 – 06:00 hrs Local (22:00 hrs UTC)	
Occurrence category:	Serious Incident	
Occurrence type:	Flight Crew Incapacitation	
Phase of flight:	Enroute	
Location:	Approximately 974 km south of Hong Kong near Manila	
	Latitude: 14° 1.10' N	Longitude: 116° 53.67' E

Pilot in Command details

Licence details:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence (Aeroplanes)
Aeronautical experience:	25,000 hours
Command time on type:	97 hours
Medical certificate:	Class 1
Ratings:	B747-200/300/400, B777-200/300/300ER, A350-900/1000
Crew composition:	Captain, First Officer

Aircraft details

Manufacturer and model:	Airbus A350-941	
Serial number:	0119	
Registration:	B-LRR	
Operator:	Cathay Pacific Airways Limited	
Number of engines:	Two	
Type of engines:	Rolls-Royce Trent XWB-84 turbo-fan	
Type of operation:	Scheduled Passenger Service	
Departure:	Perth International Airport (YPPH)	
Destination:	Hong Kong International Airport (VHHH)	
Persons on board:	Crew – 13	Passengers – 270
Injuries:	Nil	
Aircraft damage:	Nil	

Safety Investigation Summary

On 21 February 2019, a Cathay Pacific Airways Airbus A350-941 (A350) aircraft, registration, B-LRR was operating from Perth International Airport (YPPH), Australia, to Hong Kong International Airport (VHHH), as a scheduled passenger flight.

As the aircraft was enroute to Hong Kong, near Manila at about 06:00 hrs local time, approximately 974 km south of Hong Kong, the Captain informed the First Officer (FO) that he felt out of breath and his vision was impaired. The Captain then declared he was incapacitated.

The FO continued with his Pilot Flying duties and assumed command of the aircraft. A Senior Purser (SP) was assigned to assist in the flight deck in accordance with the operator's A350-941 Quick Reference Handbook (QRH) for Crew Incapacitation.

The crew sought medical assistance from both a recognised medical professional on board who was a passenger in conjunction with medical advice from the company doctor in Hong Kong through the cockpit Satcom system.

The condition of the Captain stabilised with the supply of medical oxygen. The Captain remained conscious and in communication with the FO and the SP throughout the occurrence, although the Captain was officially designated as incapacitated.

As the flight entered the Hong Kong Flight Information Region (FIR), the FO declared a PAN-PAN call to the Hong Kong Air Traffic Control (HKATC) requesting a priority approach due to the medical emergency and a lower flight level to decrease the cabin pressure altitude in order to assist with the Captain's recovery.

The ATC provided a shortened track for the flight to land on the 07R runway of VHHH.

The aircraft landed uneventfully at 07:16 hrs local time. On arrival the Captain was assisted by paramedics.

Opening the Investigation

On receipt of a notification by the operator of 21 February 2019, the Chief Accident and Safety Investigator ordered an investigation into the circumstances and contributing factors that resulted in this serious incident, in accordance with the Hong Kong Civil Aviation (Investigation of Accidents) Regulations (CAP448B) and the requirements of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (ICAO Annex 13).

The Bureau of Enquiry and Analysis for Civil Aviation Safety (BEA) of the France representing the State of Design and Manufacture of the aircraft, the Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) of the United Kingdom as the State of Design and Manufacture of the engine, and the Civil Aviation Department (CAD) of Hong Kong were notified.

Investigation Progress and Completion

The investigation team is conducting detailed analysis of the data and information collected in order to determine the circumstances and causes of this serious incident in conjunction with identifying areas that need further investigation and/or lines of investigation to be followed up.

The anticipated duration of this serious incident investigation is twelve months.

Preliminary Report

This preliminary report is published to communicate the information obtained during the initial phase of the ongoing investigation. The purpose is to provide a brief update on how the investigation is progressing as well as a preliminary description of the sequence of events. When matters directly affecting safety are involved, they will be disseminated as soon as the information is available.

During the further course of the investigation, should any safety recommendations be necessary, they will be promulgated immediately.

The information contained in this preliminary report is released in accordance with CAP448B and the requirements of ICAO Annex 13. It is derived from the initial investigation of the occurrence, and must be regarded as tentative.

Readers are cautioned that new evidence will become available as the investigation progresses that will enhance the Air Accident Investigation Authority's understanding of the serious incident, as such, no analysis or conclusions are included in this report.

23 April 2019

Air Accident Investigation Authority Information

Check the Air Accident Authority Investigation website for information, reports and updates:

<https://www.thb.gov.hk/aaia/eng/index.htm>

The Air Accident Investigation Authority 24/7 Duty Investigator Hotline:

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