

Division Operations
Manager

Latin American

Miami

Station Manager

Latin American

Guatemala

October 24, 1947

SCHEDULE DELAY - TRIP 504 OF OCTOBER 22, 1947

Your radiogram 231515

We are enclosing herewith statements received from the Flight Dispatcher and the Senior Maintenance man on duty in connection with the flight cancelation of trip 504, NC-49552 on October 22, 1947 by Captain Baxter. Statement from Captain Baxter is not attached inasmuch as Captain Baxter departed from Guatemala prior to receipt of your radiogram.

It is believed that the attached statements fully cover this incident.

(Original
Signed by) E. GUERRA

E. Guerra

encl.

cc: Sector Chief Pilot - BRO
Supt. of Stations - MIA

Station Manager

Chief Mechanic

Latin American

Latin American

Guatemala

Guatemala

October 23, 1947

TRIP 504 DELAYED OCTOBER 22, 1947

See attached radios

NC-49552 arrived as trip 504 at 2400 October 22, with the following report in the log book: "HIT BUZZARD-WING OUT BOARD LEFT ENG NACELLE". Also the incoming Captain stated verbally on arrival that the flying characteristics of the ship were normal.

Upon inspection of the left wing by the crew chief on duty (R. Alvarado), only one small dent was found on the leading edge between the stations zero and 17.9, taking in consideration that the structure of the wing could by no means be damaged, since the dent was too small and between two nose ribs, the ship was released for schedule by maintenance. However when the outgoing Captain was notified of the condition of the plane, he refused definitely to take the ship unless it was released by the Chief Pilot or the Operations Manager, since he had been involved in a similar case once before, in which the plane had been released by maintenance and at arrival BRO the Chief Pilot had criticized him for having flown the plane under such a condition.

Further internal inspection was given to the dent and the structure of the wing through the inspection plate in the wheel well. I was called personally to inspect the damage and the office of the Airline Maintenance Superintendent and the Dispatcher on duty in Gua were notified that the damage was minor and that the ship was okay to continue on schedule.

Following instructions received on radio from OXNIA 231210 (#6 on the attached copy), the plane departed as trip A504 at 1525 Oct. 23.

Original signed by

H. Monzon

RADIOS CONCERNING TRIP 504 CANCELLED OCTOBER 22, 1947

- #1 - A OXMIA OWBRO
504552 HIT BUZZARD BETWEEN SALGUA DAMAGING LEFT WING NEAR FUSELAGE STOP MECH RELEASED AIRCRAFT BUT UNABLE TO CHECK FOR DAMAGE STOP CAPT WANTS CHECK FOR STRUCTURAL DAMAGE BEFORE TAKING PLANE AS IS HEAVILY LOADED OR RELEASE FROM OPERATIONS MGR OR CHIEF PILOT STOP HAVE SENT PSGRS HOME AND BELIEVE CAN ACCOMMODATE ON 506/23 ADVISE INSTRUCTIONS
OWGUA 230027
- #2 - A MJMIA DRBRO OXMIA
MJMIA CY DRBRO OXMIA STOP LEFT WING NC552 TR504 SLIGHTLY DENT BY BUZZARD FROM SAL GUA BETWEEN STATIONS ZERO AND SEVENTEEN STOP DENT NOT EVEN ONE EIGHTH DEEP STOP INCOMING CAPT REPORTED SHIP TO BE OKAY STOP AFTER INSPECTION SHIP RELEASED FOR SKED BY MTCE STOP OUTGOING CAPTAIN REFUSED TAKE SHIP UNTIL IT RELEASED BY OPERATIONS MGR OR CHIEF PILOT STOP RPT SHIP RELEASED BY MTCE FOR SKED STOP TRIP BEING CANCELLED
MAGUA 230245
- #3 C MAGUA OWGUA
MAGUA COPY OWGUA STOP MJMIA REQUEST DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO NC552
OXMIA 230245
- #4 B OXMIA MJMIA
OXMIA CY MJMIA STOP RE YOUR 230245 AND MY 230245 STOP LEFT WING LEADING EDGE SLIGHTLY DAMAGED ONLY
MAGUA 230320
- #5 PS MAGUA
REYRS 230245 MATTER BEING REFERRED TO OPMIA
OXMIA 230530
- #6 B OWGUA MAGUA
OWGUA MAGUA COPY MJMIA ODMIA RE STATUS NC-552 ODMIA ADVISES TO USE NC552 LE// IN SKED OFN UPON RELEASE BY MAGUA STOP OPERATE AIRCRAFT AS EXTRA SECTION GUA-BRO SASPO STOP OWGUA ADV NAME CAPTAIN 504/22 WHO REFUSED TO TAKE TRIP RUSH STOP ADV ETD GUA NC552
OXMIA 231210
- #7 C OXMIA MJMIA
OXMIA CY MJMIA STOP REMY 230245 AND YOUR 231210 STOP SLIGHTLY DENT ON LEFT WING LEADING EDGE OK TO CONTINUE UNTIL SKED WING CHANGE STOP NOT EVEN ONE RIVET DAMAGE STOP INSIDE STRUCTURE INSPECTED THROUGH INSPECTION PLATE IN WHEEL WELL STOP NAME CAPT WHO REFUSED TAKE TRIP 504/22 AFTER SHIP RELEASED FOR SKED BY MTCE P B BASTER
MAGUA 231500



MEMORANDUM

FOR USE BY ADDRESSEE

SEN ORIGINAL BY

OPERATIONS MGA

FROM B S ADAMS

DEPT. LAD - MIAMI
OR DIV.DEPT. FLITE DISPATCH
OR DIV.

LOCATION MIAMI

LOCATION GUATEMALA

FORM 9-29 D

DATE: OCTOBER 24, 1947

SUBJECT: REFUSAL OF CAPT P BAXTER TO TAKE TRIP 504/22 NC49552

REFERENCE:

THE FIRST INDICATION OWGUA HAD OF ANYTHING UNUSUAL WITH 552 WAS THE ARRIVAL OF CAPTAIN JULIFS WITH CAPTAIN BAXTER IN THE FLITE WATCH OFFICE.

"THIS TRIP MAY NOT LEAVE," WERE THE FIRST WORDS OF CAPT JULIFS. "WE HIT A BUZZARD JUST AFTER TAKEOFF AT SAL. I HAD THOUGHT OF GOING BACK; HOWEVER, THE AIRCRAFT WAS OPERATING WELL WITH NO APPARENT CHANGE IN FLITE CHARACTERISTICS SO WE CAME ON IN."

"I AM NOT TAKING THIS PLANE AS IT IS," WERE CAPT. AIN BAXTER'S WORDS. I HAD A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE ONCE BEFORE: THE INCOMING PILOT REPORTED THE PLANE NORMAL, THE MECHANIC RELEASED THE AIRCRAFT, AND I TOOK THE TRIP TO BROWNSVILLE. WHEN I GOT THERE, HOWEVER, I WAS SEVERELY CRITICIZED BY CAPTAIN FLEMING FOR EXERCISING POOR JUDGEMENT.

"WITH THE LOAD WE ARE CARRYING I DO NOT BELIEVE THE ONE ENGINE PERFORMANCE WOULD TAKE CARE OF US IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY. BESIDES THAT IT IS DARK AND THE DAMAGED WING CAN ONLY HINDER THE AIRFOIL PERFORMANCE AT TAKE OFF.

"THERE IS NO DEFINITE PROOF THAT INTERNAL DAMAGE IS NOT PRESENT. NEITHER YOU, NOR I, NOR THE MECHANIC IS IN A POSITION TO VERIFY NO DAMAGE WITHOUT AN INTERNAL CHECK."

AT THIS POINT I WENT OUT TO THE AIRCRAFT TO SEE THE DAMAGE. THE DENT WAS SMALL AND LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE FUSELAGE WING STUB ON THE LEADING EDGE OF THE WING PROPER BETWEEN STATIONS ZERO AND 17.9. IT SEEMED TO BE BENT ON BOTH SIDES OF AN INTERNAL MEMBER, PROBABLY A RIB OF THE FAIRING AND INDICATED A SLIGHT FORCING OF THE INTERNAL RIB. THE DAMAGE WAS SMALL AND THE MECHANIC REAFFIRMED THAT THE AIRCRAFT WAS AIRWORTHY. I RETURNED AND SUGGESTED TO CAPT BAXTER THAT WE TRY TO WORK OUT A SOLUTION AS: THE DAMAGE WAS SLIGHT; A VISUAL CHECK WOULD NECESSITATE REMOVAL OF THE WING; THAT WE HAD HAD SO MANY DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS TODAY THAT WE WERE ANXIOUS TO GET THIS TRIP THROUGH CARRYING PASSENGERS OFFLOADED FROM OTHER TRIPS; THAT, ALTHOUGH NO INTERNAL CHECK COULD BE MADE NOW, MANY A TRIP SHOWING GREATER DAMAGE HAD BEEN RELEASED TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL FLIGHT.

CAPTAIN BAXTER SAID THAT HE WAS WELL AWARE OF THAT AND REMINDED ME THAT HE HAD TAKEN ONE SUCH TRIP. BUT, IN VIEW OF THE SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES, TAKING THIS FLIGHT WOULD MERELY BE REPEATING THE SAME POOR JUDGEMENT.

RECEIVED
STATION MANAGER

25 OCT 1947

PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, INC.
CITY

I ASKED IF THIS DAMAGE WAS COMPARABLE IN SERIOUSNESS WITH THE PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE. HE REPLIED THAT NONE OF US WAS ABLE TO SAY HOW SERIOUS THE DAMAGE WAS. IN THIS CASE WITHOUT A VISUAL INTERNAL CHECK.

CAPTAIN BAXTER OFFERED TO TAKE THE PLANE WITHOUT PASSENGERS IF NECESSARY OR SUGGESTED THAT, IF WE PREFERRED, WE COULD GET ANOTHER PILOT. I DID NOT FEEL IT ADVISABLE TO ACT ON THIS LAST SUGGESTION.

I ASKED IF HE WOULD TAKE THE TRIP IF WE OBTAINED A RELEASE FOR HIM. HE AGREED TO THIS. HE WOULD TAKE THE TRIP IF WE OBTAINED A RELEASE FROM THE OPERATIONS MANAGER, CHIEF PILOT, OR SECTION CHIEF PILOT.

TOWARDS THAT END I SENT THE OWGUA 230027 MSG. REALIZING THE PROBABLE DELAY IN GETTING THIS RELEASE I DID NOT FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE WISE TO KEEP THE PASSENGERS WAITING AT THE AIRPORT. WE, THEREFORE SENT THE PSGRS HOME AND SECURED RESERVATIONS FOR THEM ON 506/23.

CAPTAIN BAXTER WENT BACK TO THE HOTEL WITH HIS CREW TO WAIT FOR INSTRUCTIONS FROM OXMIA.

IT IS MY BELIEF THAT CAPTAIN BAXTER WOULD HAVE TAKEN THE TRIP IF HE HAD NOT BEEN CALLED DOWN ON A PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE FOR EXERCISING POOR JUDGEMENT. HIS ATTITUDE AT ALL TIMES DURING THE DISCUSSION WAS FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE AND, I BELIEVE, HE ACTED ON WHAT HE SERIOUSLY BELIEVED TO BE PROPER JUDGEMENT.

TRIP 504552 WAS CLEARED: GUAMEX VIA TEH VER IFR TAM 690 ADAMS.

THE CLEARANCE FORM WAS NOT RETURNED TO THIS OFFICE AFTER THE CANCELLATION. ~~THE~~ THE GROSS WEIGHT AND MAINTENANCE RELEASE; THEREFORE, ~~IT~~ IS NOT INCLUDED WITH THIS REPORT.

THE ACCOMPANYING WEATHERS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

TIME	STA	WEATHER	WIND	VIS	CEIL	KOLLS	REMARKS
22/2335	GUA	CLDY	sw-4	UNL	UNL	1018.2	1/10 SC 1800, 1/10 SC 2500 DSNT CBS ALL DIRECTIONS
23/0026	GUA	DSNT LTNG	SW-4	UNL	2500	1018.6	7/10 AT 2500, 1/10 1500. DSNT LTNG WNW/SW/SE/S. DSNT CBS ALL DIRECTIONS.
22/2235	MEX	LGT DRZL	SE-18	UNL	3000	1020.8	
23/0035	MEX	RN IN SITE	NW-13	9	2500	1021.3	LARGE RAIN AREAS TO THE N, NW AND W.
22/2235	TAM	RN IN SITE	SE-4	UNL	6800	1020.5	3/10sc 2000
23/0035	TAM	OVC	SSE-4	UNL	UNL	1010.5	

B. S. Adams
BARNARD S ADAMS

ORIGINAL AND FOUR COPIES
TO OAGUA FOR DISTRIBUTION.

Capt. Baxter's Copy

Sector Chief Pilot

Captain P. B. Baxter

Latin American

Latin American

Brownsville

Brownsville

October 27, 1947

SCHEDULE DELAY - TRIP 504, OCTOBER 22, 1947

Trip 504/22 arrived Guatemala having hit a buzzard between Salvador and Guatemala damaging the left wing just outboard of the nacelle. I was to pick up the plane and fly to Mexico. The mechanic on duty advised that he was unable to check for structural damage due to it being impossible to see inside that portion of the wing from any of the inspection holes, but was willing to release the plane if I would take it.

In 1944 a similar incident occurred in which I took the plane after it had been properly inspected but not signed for. After I brought this trip to Brownsville you advised me that in the future I should attempt to get the incoming pilot to report any damage to the plane, and should definitely see that the damage was properly inspected and signed for before accepting the plane for a scheduled flight. I felt this had not been done in the present instance and therefore I refused to accept the airplane, advising all concerned in Guatemala that I was acting in accordance with your instructions to me on this matter and therefore could not take the plane without an internal inspection of the damage or, since my decision varied from that of the mechanic, without a release from you or higher authority under these circumstances.

Accordingly Dispatcher Adams sent the following message:

A OXMA ONBRO

OWGUA 230027

504552 HIT BUZZARD BETWEEN SALGUA DAMAGING LEFT WING NEAR
FUSELAGE STOP MECH RELEASED AIRCRAFT BUT UNABLE TO CHECK
FOR DAMAGE STOP CAPT WANTS CHECK FOR STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
BEFORE TAKING PLANE AS IS HEAVILY LOADED OR RELEASE FROM
OPERATIONS MGR OR CHIEF PILOT STOP HAVE SENT PSGRS HOME
AND BELIEVE CAN ACCOMMODATE ON 506/23 STOP ADVISE
INSTRUCTION

BSA

cc: Division Operations Manager - Mia

This was answer

- 2 -

October 27, 1947

B OWGUA MAGUA following message:

OWGUA MAGUA COPY MJMIA ODMIA
TO USE NC 552 IN SKED OPN UPON RELEASE NC-552 ODMIA ADVISES
AIRCRAFT AS EXTRA SECTION GUA-BRO SASPO STOP MAGUA STOP OPERATE
CAPTAIN 504/22 WHO REFUSED TO TAKE TRIP RUSH STOP ADV ETD GUA
NC552

OXMIA 231210

1238

The first message stated the damage occurred near the fuselage when it actually occurred just outboard of the left nacelle. In the meantime Traffic-Guatemala, acting on the information that the wing could not be inspected internally and that I would not carry passengers in it without an internal inspection, advised the passengers they would go out on Trip 506 and sent them back to the hotel.

Also in the meantime Station Mechanic Monzon arrived and determined that the damage could have, and should have been inspected through some inspection holes available and that had he been there the trip would have been delayed only 15 minutes approximately. However, by this time the passengers were at the hotel and it was decided to proceed with the plan to send them on Trip 506.

I have subsequently discussed the facts in the case with Messrs. Tom Ward and R. D. Sundell, both of whom concurred with the statement that the damage could have and should have been inspected, and that I was within my rights in demanding that it be inspected.

I am extremely sorry this incident occurred and am willing to accept full responsibility for the entire delay if it can be proved that I was not following instructions, and was not acting in the interest of safety.

Paul B. Baxter
Paul B. Baxter

DIARIO DE AERONAUTICA DE LA ESTACION DE RADIO N° 103362

Pan American Airways, Guatemala City

A OXMI A OWBRO

OWGUA 230027

504552 HIT BUZZARD BETWEEN SALGUA DAMAGING LEFT WING NEAR FUSELAGE
STOP MECH RELEASED AIRCRAFT BUT UNABLE TO CHECK FOR DAMAGE STOP CAPT
WANTS CHECK FOR STRUCTURAL DAMAGE BEFORE TAKING PLANE AS IS HEAVILY
LOADED OR RELEASE FROM OPERATIONS MGR OR CHIEF PILOT STOP HAVE SENT
PSGRS HOME AND BELIEVE CAN ACCOMMODATE ON 506/23 STOP ADVISE INSTRUCTION

BSA

C O P Y

10-23-47

RUSH OBBRO 231515 ODMIA

OAGUA COPY OBBRO STOP RE PILOT REFUSAL TO DEPART GUA NC552 TRIP
504 REQUEST OBTAIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WRITTEN STATEMENT OUTGOING
PILOT DISPATCHER ON DUTY AND SENIOR MAINTENANCE MAN ON DUTY STOP
IF AIRCRAFT LOG DOES NOT REFLECT INCOMING PILOT REPORT REQUEST
ALSO OBTAIN WRITTEN REPORT FROM HIM STOP OWGUA INCLUDE IN THEIR REPORT
COPY OF CLEARANCE AND RELATED WEATHER REPORTS STOP FOR INFO OBBRO
THIS INFORMATION WILL BE FORWARDED HIS OFFICE FOR FINAL HANDLING

OXMIA 231210

B OWGUA MAGUA

OWGUA MAGUA COPY MJMIA ODMIA RE-STATUS NC-552 ODMIA ADVISES TO USE
NC 552 IN SKED OPN UPON RELEASE BY MAGUA STOP OPERATE AIRCRAFT AS
EXTRA SECTION GUA-BRO SASPO STOP OWGUA ADV NAME CAPTAIN 504/22 WHO
REFUSED TO TAKE TRIP RUSH STOP ADV ETD GUA NC552

1238