

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### PNG AIC RELEASES FINAL REPORT INTO 28 JULY 2018 AIR VANUATU ATR 72-500 ACCIDENT IN BAUERFIELD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, PORT VILA, REPUBLIC OF VANUATU.

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC), Mr. Hubert Namani today released the Accident Investigation Commission's Final Report into the Air Vanuatu ATR 72-500 aircraft accident at Port Vila, Republic of Vanuatu.

Mr. Namani said "on 28 July 2018, at 10:33 Vanuatu local time an Avions de Transport Regional ATR72-500, registered YJ-AV71, operated by Air Vanuatu Operations Limited was on a scheduled passenger service flight from Whitegrass Airport, Tanna to Bauerfield International Airport, Port Vila; a distance of 117 nautical miles (217 kilometres).

"During the landing the aircraft veered off the runway and collided with two unoccupied Britten-Norman BN-2 Islander aircraft in the apron area.

"After the aircraft came to a stop, the crew conducted an orderly expedited evacuation of the occupants. The four crew members and the 39 passengers were uninjured. Aviation Rescue and Firefighting Services personnel assisted with the evacuation process."

Mr. Namani explained "at the time, the PNG government was in advanced negotiations with the Vanuatu Government, to provide cooperation and assistance in the investigation of aircraft accidents and serious incidents in accordance with the *International Standards of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation*. In this context, immediately after the accident, the Director of the Civil Aviation Authority of Vanuatu (CAAV) requested that the PNG AIC conduct the investigation under full delegation from CAAV. The AIC accepted the delegation of the whole of the investigation."

Hon. Jotham Napat, MP, Minister for Infrastructure and Public Works of the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu, and Hon. Alfred Manase, MP, the PNG Minister for Civil Aviation at the time of the accident fully endorsed the delegation of the investigation to the PNG AIC.

The report found that while enroute at 16,000 ft and about 60 nm from Port Vila, the flight crew noticed the *No. 2 engine Interstage Turbine Temperature (ITT 2)* gauge reading increase rapidly and subsequently exceed its normal operating limits, causing the *Master Caution* visual and aural warnings to activate.

Mr. Namani explained "the engine malfunction generated smoke, which activated the *Electrical Smoke Warning*, and prompted the pilots to declare a 'Mayday' and commence an immediate descent towards Bauerfield International Airport.

"Apart from the engine, none of the aircraft's systems, including electrical and hydraulic systems, malfunctioned in-flight. The loss and unavailability of these systems was induced by flight crew actions, due to the diversion of their attention away from the engine issue upon the activation of the 'Electrical Smoke' warning.

The flight crew performed a one-engine inoperative landing, touching down on runway 29 near the landing zone.

During the landing roll, emergency brakes were not used and maximum reverse thrust was applied, the flight crew lost directional control and the aircraft veered left off the runway.

The investigation found that the engine malfunction, while contributing to the generation of smoke and subsequent crew checklist actions, did not cause the accident. Flight crews are trained to land multi-engine aircraft with an engine inoperative.

Mr. Namani said “as a result of the investigation into the accident the Commission issued three *Safety Recommendations* to the aircraft manufacturer ATR to ensure checklists are ergonomically able to draw the attention of flight crews to ensure appropriate safety action is taken and ensure that the appropriate ‘*Before landing*’ checklist is used.

“The AIC also issued two *Safety Recommendations* to Air Vanuatu Operations Limited to ensure flight and cabin crews are adequately trained, current and competent in the execution of emergency procedures.

“I am making this report public today in accordance with PNG’s international civil aviation obligations to make the Final Report publicly available as soon as possible after the completion of the investigation.

“The report is based on the investigation carried out by the AIC in accordance with the *Papua New Guinea Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended)*, and *Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation*. It contains factual information, analysis of that information, findings and contributing (causal) factors, other factors, safety actions, and safety recommendations.”

Mr. Namani added “as with all AIC investigations, this investigation was independent of the providers of air services and aviation related services. It was also separate from judicial and administrative proceedings to apportion blame or liability.

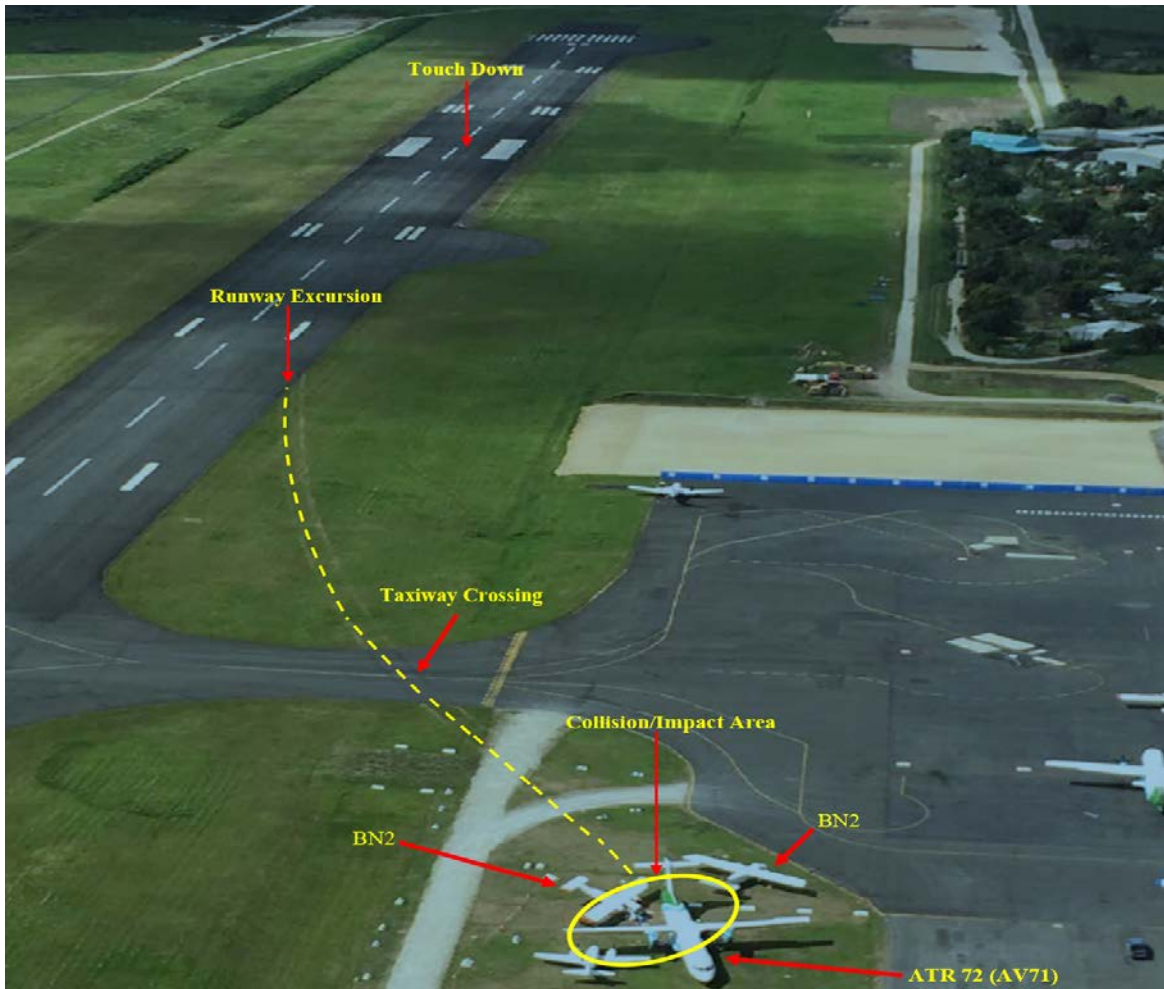
“The report is based on evidence, and therefore fact-based statements in the report should not be interpreted as apportioning blame.

“The leadership and professionalism shown by the AIC team of investigators on behalf of the Nation has been recognised in the Region, and demonstrates the importance of continually improving safety, in order to provide the safest possible conditions for aviation activity that will contribute to the development of the Nation of PNG and the Region.”

The Report and the associated *Safety Recommendations* in full, are available on the PNG AIC website; [www.aic.gov.pg](http://www.aic.gov.pg).



**Hubert Namani, LLB**  
*Chief Commissioner*



ATR 72-500 registered YJ-AV71 runway excursion