ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION

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**Safety recommendation: AIC 24-R16/24-2002**

**Addressed to: Air Niugini Limited**

**Date issued: 29 November 2024**

**Investigation link: AIC 24-2002**

**Action status: Issued**

## Introduction

On 8 August 2024, at 12:04 local time (00:04 UTC), the AIC was notified by CASA PNG of a serious incident that occurred on 23 July 2024, involving a B737-800 aircraft, registered P2-PXB operated by Air Niugini Limited during a Regular Public Transport (RPT) flight from Jacksons International Airport, Port Moresby, to Nadzab Tomodachi International Airport, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea. The AIC immediately commenced an investigation on 8 August 2024.

## Occurrence

On 23 July 2024, at about 09:00 local time (23:00 UTC[1]), a B737-800 aircraft, registered P2-PXB (PXB), owned by Loftleidir Icelandic and operated by Air Niugini Limited (ANL) was conducting a RPT flight from Jackson International Airport (Jacksons Airport), Port Moresby to Nadzab Tomodachi International Airport (Nadzab Airport), Morobe Province, had a spillage of hazardous material, mercury in its cargo compartment, during passenger boarding and loading of cargo.

There were sixty-eight persons on board the aircraft: 2 pilots, 4 cabin crew and 61 passengers. There were no injuries reported passengers, crew and ground personnel.

The aircraft aft cargo compartment (Cargo Hold No. 3) floor from the doorway of the aircraft was contaminated with mercury.

[1] The 24-hour clock, in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), is used in this report to describe the local time as specific events occurred. Local time in the area of the serious incident, Papua New Guinea Time (Pacific/Port Moresby) is UTC + 10 hours.

The training records also showed that the Cargo Screening Officer's Dangerous Goods Awareness (DGA) certificate had expired on 30 June 2024.

The Officer's training records showed that he had completed a Ground Aviation Security Awareness Training, X-Ray Screeners Training (Recurrent) and was current. However, at the time of the occurrence, the following courses had already expired:

- Dangerous Goods Awareness -30 June 2024

The investigation also found that the X-ray Screening Course was attended by the officer on 28 March 2023. However, according to the operator's Air Operator Security Program, Version 20, the X-Ray Cargo screening course is required to be delivered in three (3) days.

## Recommendation number AIC 24-R16/24-2002 to Air Niugini Limited

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission recommends that Air Niugini Limited should ensure all its X-ray Cargo Screening Officers are appropriately qualified and adequately trained to effectively perform their duties, in accordance with the requirements its Air Operators Security Program.

## Action requested

The AIC requests that Air Niugini Limited note recommendation *AIC 24-R16/24-2002 and* provide a response to the AIC within 90 days of the issue date, nor later than 27 February 2025 and explain (including evidence) how Air Niugini Limited has addressed the safety deficiency identified in the safety recommendation.

**Maryanne J Wal**
*Chief Commissioner*

## Air Niugini Limited response to Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002

On 10 January 2025, the operator provided a response to *Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002*, via email stating that they were currently addressing the actions and shall revert before the due date.

The operator did not provide an update on their actions by the due date, 27 February 2025.

On 14 March 2025, a courtesy follow-up email was sent to the operator by the AIC. The operator responded on the same day stating that:

1. Five of their staff had completed the 'Safety Passage X-Ray Image Interpretation Trainers' training conducted by CJ Consulting Group, Singapore.
2. Air Niugini Limited had accomplished the Safe Passage Computer Base Training (CBT) X-ray Screener Training and Certification System. The training syllabus is currently with Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA PNG), for review and acceptance before they can commence training for their X-ray Cargo Screening Officers.

Attached to the email were copies of:

1. Certificates of the five staff who completed the 'Safe Passage X-Ray Image Interpretation Certification for Trainers' training, and
2. 'X-ray Screeners Training' certificates for the X-ray Cargo Screening Officers,
3. The syllabus for 'Computer Based Training System for X-Ray Screeners' training which was submitted to CASA PNG for acceptance.

On 25 March 2025, the operator provided the 'X-ray Screeners Training' certificates for the remaining two X-ray Cargo Screening Officers, following a request made by AIC.

On 7 May 2025, the AIC made another courtesy follow on the status of CASA PNG's acceptance of their 'Computer Based Training System for X-Ray Screeners' training syllabus. The operator responded on the same day stating that they are currently awaiting the availability of CASA PNG personnel to assess/examine the training program, for approval.

## AIC assessment of Air Niugini Limited response

The AIC reviewed Air Niugini Limited's response to *Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002* and notes that the operator will commence training upon approval of their training program by CASA PNG, which is subject to the availability of CASA PNG personnel.

The AIC also notes that the completion of the 'Safe Passage Computer Based Training' by all X-ray Screeners, will address the deficiency identified in *Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002*.

The AIC has assigned the response a ***satisfactory intent*** rating.

The AIC recorded the status of the Safety Recommendation: **MONITOR**

**Maryanne J Wal**
*Chief Commissioner*
28 May 2025

## Air Niugini Limited response to Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002

On 29 May 2026, the operator provided a response to *Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002*, via email with evidence of safety action taken to address the safety deficiency identified during Investigation AIC 24-2002.

The evidence submitted by Air Niugini included a CASA PNG signed document titled, **Acceptance of Air Niugini Safe Passage International CBT X-Ray Screening Course.** The document incorporated the CASA PNG Compliance Summary Report arising from an inspection of the Air Niugini Safe Passage International X-Ray Screening Course

## AIC assessment of Air Niugini Limited response

The AIC reviewed Air Niugini Limited's response to *Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002* and notes that the Air Niugini Safe Passage International CBT X-Ray Screening Course accepted by CASA PNG is relevant for all X-Ray Screening personnel.

Based on the evidence provided and the safety action taken, the AIC has assessed the response as partially satisfactory.

Accordingly, the AIC recorded the status of the Safety Recommendation as: **MONITOR**

**Maryanne J. Wal**
*Chief Commissioner*
18 June 2026

## Air Niugini Limited Response to Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002

On 21 October 2026, Air Niugini Limited provided a response to *Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002* by email, including evidence of the *X-Ray Interpretation Safe Training Program* conducted through the Safe Passage Computer Based Training System.

The training course was conducted over two separate sessions, from 17 - 20 September 2026 and 23 – 26 September, for two batches of participants. The evidence provided confirmed that all eight participants successfully completed the training.

## AIC Assessment of Air Niugini Limited Response

The AIC reviewed Air Niugini Limited's response to *Safety Recommendation AIC 24-R16/24-2002* and noted that the safety action taken, through the delivery of the *X-Ray Interpretation Safe Training Program* on the Safe Passage Computer Based Training System, had fully addressed the safety deficiency identified in the *Safety Recommendation.*

Based on the evidence provided and the safety action implemented by the operator, the AIC assessed the response as ***Fully Satisfactory***.

Accordingly, the AIC recorded the status of the Safety Recommendation as: **CLOSED -RESPONSE ACCEPTED.**

**Maryanne J. Wal**
*Chief Commissioner*
19 November 2026