

AEI Press Release

## Turkish Airlines Accident Report Confirms AEI Safety Warnings

10<sup>th</sup> May 2010

Dutch accident investigators have now published the findings of their investigation<sup>1</sup> into the Turkish Airlines fatal crash near Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam on the 25th of February 2009. A major contributing factor to the accident was the non reporting of defects, an issue AEI has been warning about for some time now<sup>2</sup>. AEI further welcomes the report's support of AEI policy, recommending regulators including EASA, to "make (renewed) efforts to ensure airlines are aware of the importance of reporting and ensure that reporting procedures are adhered to".

AEI regret that the aviation industry is currently under severe economic pressure but that can be no excuse for cutting any corners particularly as far as safety is concerned. Some may even go as far as to imply that the cause of this accident is a specifically Turkish one but that is complete nonsense, as the culture of not reporting defects as they occur, but rather when financially convenient, is widespread. The practice has now however been shown up for what it really is; extremely dangerous.

A professional organisation such as AEI will always exercise its moral obligation in highlighting to the travelling public the dangers of allowing commercially driven practices to undermine safety. The aim is to prevent further unnecessary tragedy and loss of life. Unfortunately however the downward trend probably will not end with the Turkish accident. There are still a number of open issues including the serious issue of regulators losing objectiveness over the airlines they regulate. This is dangerous and needs to cease immediately.

In the United States the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) have already been dealing with this issue in a very effective manner and their efforts are to be applauded. Unfortunately in Europe however the situation remains that both airlines and regulators suffer no consequences for failing in their responsibilities.

AEI will continue to raise awareness of these issues but the ultimate responsibility of ensuring operators meet their regulatory requirements is in the hands of politicians. Will they now finally start to act?

Note to the Editor:

The Turkish Airlines Boeing 737-800 (flight TK1951) was flying from Istanbul Atatürk Airport in Turkey to Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, on 25 February 2009. During the approach to runway 18 Right (18R) at Schiphol airport, the aircraft crashed into a field at a distance of about 1.5 kilometres from the threshold of the runway. This accident cost the lives of four crew members, including the three pilots, and five passengers, with a further three crew members and 117 passengers sustaining injuries.

Shortly after the accident, the initial investigation results indicated that the left radio altimeter system had passed on an erroneous altitude reading of -8 feet to the automatic throttle control system (the auto throttle). This known defect had not been reported in the aircraft technical log prior to the fateful flight.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.onderzoeksraad.nl/docs/rapporten/Rapport\\_TA\\_ENG\\_web.pdf](http://www.onderzoeksraad.nl/docs/rapporten/Rapport_TA_ENG_web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [AEI Press Release 12th September 2008](#)