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Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board STSB

Status report by the Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board STSB

concerning the status of the accident investigation involving the commercial aircraft A220-371, HB-JCD,

operated by Swiss International Air Lines Ltd.

on 23 December 2024

50 NM east of Graz (LOWG), Austria

Purpose of this status report

In accordance with Article 16 (7) of Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation and repealing Directive 94/56/EC ((EU) No 996/2010), the Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board (STSB) is publishing a report detailing the progress of the investigation on the anniversary of the accident.

As some of the necessary investigations have not yet been completed, no further facts regarding the course of the accident will be published in this status report beyond those already contained in the preliminary report.

The definitive version of this report is the original report in German.

All information, unless otherwise indicated, relates to the time of the accident.

All times in this report, unless otherwise indicated, are stated in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). At the time of the accident Central European Time (CET) applied as Local Time (LT). The relation between LT, CET and UTC is:

LT = MEZ = UTC + 1 hour.

Summary

Overview

Operator	Swiss International Air Lines Ltd., Malzgasse 15, 4052 Basel
Owner	LHAMI Leasing Limited, Dragonara Road, MT-3140 St. Julians, Malta
Manufacturer	Airbus Canada Limited Partnership
Aircraft type	A220-371
Country of registration	Switzerland
Registration	HB-JCD
Location	50 NM east of Graz (LOWG)
Date and time	23 December 2024, 16:32 UTC
Type of operation	Scheduled
Flight number	LX1885
Flight rules	Instrument Flight Rules (IFR)
Point of departure	Bukarest Henri Coandă airport (LROP)
Destination	Zurich airport (LSZH)
Flight phase	Cruise

Synopsis

At flight level 400, around 50 NM east of Graz (LOWG), the left engine failed, and smoke entered the aircraft. A diversion to LOWG was performed, followed by an emergency evacuation on the runway.

A cabin crew member passed away on 30 December 2024.

Investigation

The accident occurred at 16:32 UTC on 23. Dezember 2024. In accordance with the principle of sovereignty, the investigation was initiated immediately on site by the Federal Safety Investigation Authority (SUB) of the Republic of Austria. The first report to the Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board (STSB) was received on the same day at 18:03 UTC. The SUB sent the Notification to Authorities on 30 December 2024.

In its role as the state of operator and state of registration, the STSB acted as the accredited representative (ACCREP) in the investigation. In January 2025, the download of the data from the two flight recorders, i.e. the flight data recorder (FDR) and the cockpit voice recorder (CVR) in the cockpit of the commercial aircraft, was made available to the SUB. On 20 January 2025, a hearing was held at Zurich Airport with all crew members in order to obtain a first-hand account of the events on board flight LX1885. At the same time, the investigation into the damaged engine began in the United States in cooperation with the engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney.

On 17 March 2025, the SUB published a preliminary report based on Article 15(4) of Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 and Recommendation 5.4.6 of Annex 13 (13th edition) of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, containing the facts established at the time of publication and providing information on the progress of the safety investigation.

In a letter dated 9 April 2025, the Federal Safety Investigation Authority of the Republic of Austria requested the Swiss Safety Investigation Authority, on the basis of Article 6(2) of Regulation (EU) No 996/2010, to take over the lead in the investigation and to continue the

investigation. The STSB complied with this request on 11 April 2025 and informed the following countries of the change in the leadership of the investigation: Germany, France, Canada, Austria and the United States of America. The public was also informed with the publication of the [preliminary report on 29 April 2025](#) on the STSB website. The SUB thus assumed the role of authorised representative of the state of occurrence. At the beginning of May 2025, all evidence and the collected files were physically handed over to the STSB.

Having accompanied the investigation from the outset as ACCREP, the STSB's scope of responsibility expanded with the handover. Among other things, the investigation focused on the engine examination, in which the STSB had only been indirectly involved up to that point. The challenge was, therefore, to take over the management of the ongoing investigation activities and, at the same time, to obtain an overview of all the data from the investigation activities carried out to date and all the files from the parties involved in the investigation.

This status report provides an overview of the current state of the investigation and is published by the STSB.

Data analysis

The extensive data from the two flight recorders provided to the SUB is being validated and analysed; for the latter, synchronising the audio recordings from the cockpit with the flight data recordings is an essential prerequisite. In addition, further recordings from the two engines are available, which provide an in-depth insight into the events immediately prior to the failure of the left engine.

Technical investigation

In connection with the investigation of the engine failure, the aim is to reconstruct the exact sequence of events and understand how the left PW1500G geared turbofan engine failed. The question of how smoke developed in the passenger cabin is also being investigated. The Protective Breathing Equipment (PBE) used by the crew members in the cabin is also being examined with the aim of identifying any technical defects and discussing their impact on the course of events on board.

Human and operational investigation

The human and operational aspects that are being clarified primarily concern the way the emergency procedures were carried out in both the cockpit and the cabin. In both cases, the crew was under considerable strain due to the smoke development on board.

Systemic investigation

As is customary in a comprehensive and broad-based investigation, the organisational and systemic circumstances and framework conditions are also being investigated. This includes, for example, possible improvements to the engine, smoke protection hoods, emergency procedures and operating and training manuals.

Outlook

In summary, it can be said that the safety investigation has made progress in all key areas and has also focused on important safety deficiencies that may not be directly related to the accident but should be remedied to improve safety.

Provided that the outstanding investigations can be completed as planned, the final report on this accident should be available in the last quarter of next year, following the usual quality assurance process.

Bern, 19 November 2025

Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board