INVESTIGATION LAUNCHED AFTER QANTAS MID-FLIGHT INCIDENT INJURES 15

News / Airlines

Fifteen passengers were hurt after a Qantas plane's alert system warned of an imminent stall as it approached Hong Kong, Australian transport safety officials said on Thursday as they launched an investigation.

Flight QF29 from Melbourne to Hong Kong was about 100 kilometres from its destination last Friday when a "stick shaker" alert occurred.

The warning causes the control stick to shake noisily, informing pilots that the plane is about to stall.

"The flight crew disconnected the autopilot and manoeuvred the aircraft in response," the Australian Transport Safety Bureau said, adding that there was "airframe buffeting".

The ATSB is interviewing the flight crew of the Boeing 747 to determine the cause of the incident that it said left 15 people with minor injuries, one of whom was taken to hospital.

Qantas described the mishap as "unexpected turbulence" that lasted about two minutes and

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launched an investigation of its own after informing the ATSB.

"The flight landed normally in Hong Kong. As a precaution, the captain called ahead for the aircraft to be met by an ambulance on arrival," Australia’s national carrier said in a statement.

"One passenger was transferred to hospital for precautionary medical assessment as a result of their injuries and later released."

The ATSB expect to release a report in the coming months.

Last year, a passenger died aboard a Qantas jet bound for Dubai, with the man reportedly suffering from a heart attack mid-air.

That same month, another flight from Melbourne to Dubai was three hours into its journey when one of its engines had a "slight vibration issue" and the aircraft was diverted to Sydney, the airline said.

15 APRIL 2017

SOURCE: THE NATIONAL
ARTICLE LINK:
https://50skyshades.com/index.php/news/airlines/investigation-launched-after-qantas-mid-flight-incident-injures-15

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