

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199602810**

**Boeing Co
B767**

02 September 1996

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NOTE: All air safety occurrences reported to the ATSB are categorised and recorded. For a detailed explanation on Category definitions please refer to the ATSB website at www.atsb.gov.au.

The Bureau did not conduct an on scene investigation of this occurrence. The information presented below was obtained from information supplied to the Bureau.

Occurrence Number:	199602810	Occurrence Type:	Incident
Location:	741km SSE Manila, Aerodrome		
State:	Other	Inv Category:	4
Date:	Monday 02 September 1996		
Time:	1400 hours	Time Zone	UTC
Highest Injury Level:	None		
Aircraft Manufacturer:	Boeing Co		
Aircraft Model:	767-338ER		
Aircraft Registration:	VH-OGJ	Serial Number:	25274
Type of Operation:	Air Transport High Capacity International Passenger Scheduled		
Damage to Aircraft:	Nil		
Departure Point:	Manila, Phillipines		
Departure Time:			
Destination:	Sydney, NSW		

Approved for Release: Thursday, January 23, 1997

FACTUAL INFORMATION

The B767 was flying from Manila, Philippines to Melbourne. The pilot in command reported that, soon after taking off, he attempted to get clearance to leave Flight Level (FL) 290 for FL 370. He attempted to obtain this clearance before leaving Manila airspace as their company had a policy of not changing flight levels in the Ujung Pandang flight information region.

There were frequent communication problems between Manila air traffic control and the flight crews of several aircraft, many of which were also tracking south and attempting to change their assigned flight levels. There were several instances of crews reading back clearances intended for other crews, as well as many instances of either crews or controllers asking for a repeat of the last message. Due to the communication problems, the B767 was only able to reach FL 330.

The flight numbers of several of the aircraft flying south were quite similar, such as Qantas 28, Qantas 86, Qantas 88, Ansett 888, and Air New Zealand 88. In addition, some of the flight crews involved in the incident had just entered the Manila area and they could not hear the controllers but could hear other flight crews. The southern part of Manila's airspace relied on HF radio communications whereas the northern part was equipped with the more reliable VHF equipment.

ANALYSIS

Some of the communication problems appeared to be attributable to the similarity of several of the aircraft callsigns. It is probable that the use of HF communications with some aircraft also contributed to the controllers' communication difficulties.

