

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199800151**

**Boeing Co  
B737**

**18 January 1998**

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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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

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**Occurrence Number:** 199800151                      **Occurrence Type:** Incident  
**Location:** Sydney, Aerodrome  
**State:** NSW    **Inv Category:** 4  
**Date:** Sunday 18 January 1998  
**Time:** 2012 hours                                      **Time Zone**                      ESuT  
**Highest Injury Level:** None

**Aircraft**    Boeing Co  
**Manufacturer:**  
**Aircraft Model:** 737-376  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-TAI    **Serial**    23483  
**Number:**  
**Type of Operation:** Air Transport Domestic High Capacity Passenger  
Scheduled  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Nil  
**Departure Point:** Sydney NSW  
**Departure Time:** 2012 ESuT  
**Destination:** Coolangatta Qld

**Approved for Release:** Wednesday, February 18, 1998

The aircraft was taking off from runway 16L when, on rotation, a loud engine vibration noise was heard throughout the aircraft. The number two engine vibration indication rose to three units, though all other engine parameters were normal. A Pan call was made and the aircraft was vectored by Air Traffic Control (ATC) along the coast and onto a 10 nm final for landing back at Sydney. During the return to the aerodrome, both engine vibration indications fluctuated to five units but returned to normal on landing.

A subsequent ground inspection of the engines revealed bird strikes to both engines. Four fan blades from each engine displayed leading edge bending although boroscope inspections of both engines revealed no internal damage. Both engine fan blade sets were changed and the aircraft was returned to service.

A seagull carcass was found during a runway inspection after the incident.

#### Safety Action

In 1996, the Bureau of Air Safety Investigation conducted a review of reported birdstrikes in Australia (report released November 1996). A number of airports, including Sydney, were identified as having a particularly high frequency of reported birdstrikes.

The review generated recommendation R960129. The recommendation was directed to the Federal Airports Corporation (FAC), the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and Airservices Australia (AA). It stated the following:



"As a result of this review the Bureau of Air Safety Investigation recommends that:

The Federal Airports Corporation and other airport authorities review 'Bird Management Plans', especially for those locations with significant frequencies of bird-strike occurrences;

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority assess the need for increased oversight of 'Bird Management Plans' to ensure the most effective and efficient reduction in the frequency of bird strikes; and

Airservices Australia assist in reducing the bird-strike hazard by issuing NOTAMs when significant bird activity has been noted or is forecast, and by advising flight crew where specific bird hazards have been observed."

On 20 January 1997, a response was received from the FAC and stated the following:

"Thank you for your letter (B/96/061) of 10 January 1997, accompanying the report 'Reported Bird Strikes in Australia' and addressed to Mr Peter Snelling. In accordance with your Safety Recommendation R960129, we have forwarded a copy of the report to all Federal Airports requesting that they all review their Bird Management Plans. We have further directed that action be taken by those airports listed in Appendix 2, Table 2 of the report to reduce the bird strike hazard

The opportunity was also taken to remind all airports to take reasonable action to reduce any identified bird hazards. We look forward to cooperating with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Airservices Australia to reduce the bird strike hazard to aviation."

On 7 April 1997, a response was received from CASA and stated the following:

"I refer to your BASI Investigation Report 'Reported Bird Strikes In Australia' containing the BASI Recommendation R960129. The following comments are forwarded for your consideration. In order to allow CASA to assess whether there is a need to increase oversight of bird management plans, we have asked our aerodrome inspectors to check that the aerodrome operators have taken all steps to guard against birdstrike, and report any specific actions taken by them to further reduce bird strike hazard. CASA will determine bird management oversight strategy following the review of aerodrome operators' efforts in regard to existing bird hazard management plans, and any proposed changes."

On 11 June 1997, a response was received from Airservices Australia. Airservices considered that their current bird hazard procedures were adequately meeting the intent of the recommendation. These procedures consisted of the inclusion of bird hazard information in the Enroute Supplement of Australia (ERSA), the issuance of bird hazard NOTAMs, and the provision of bird hazard information on Automatic Terminal Information Broadcasts and direct voice contact with Air Traffic Controllers.

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A bird hazard workshop was held in October 1997. It included representatives from the FAC, CASA, BASI, airport operators, and local government. An interim committee was formed to summarise the outcomes of the workshop and formulate strategies to address the bird hazard problem. The FAC has employed the services of Birds Australia, consultant ornithologists, to report on a quarterly basis and make recommendations on any further bird management strategies. A follow-up workshop is to be held in April 1998 to reassess the situation, evaluate current strategies and consider alternative bird management plans.

The Bureau will continue to monitor reported birdstrikes, especially at those locations with significant bird-strike occurrences.

