

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198801480**

**Boeing 737-376**

**5 March 1988**

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checking of radio navigation aids against the aircraft's main navigation system. Attempts were also made to contact the crew on the emergency frequency of 121.5 MHz, without success. Monitoring of the Sydney frequency 128.4MHz did not reveal any calls from the aircraft, which was to be expected as it would have been beyond the range for two way communications with the aircraft at the time. However, it is possible that the crew heard part of a transmission from another enroute aircraft communicating with Sydney on this frequency. No calls were made to the aircraft on 128.4 MHz, which was not one of the frequencies that would have been used on that flight.

**Significant Factors:**

It was considered that the following factors were relevant to the development of the incident:

1. The unexpected inquiry from Departures Control resulted in diversion of crew attention from other tasks.
2. The transmission from Departures Control to instruct the crew to change frequency was not spoken with full clarity.
3. The presence of radio calls on the incorrect frequency led to the crew thinking all was normal with communications.
4. The crew did not detect that they were on the wrong frequency for an extended period.

**Reccomendations:**

1. The aircraft was equipped with three VHF radio sets, only two of which were used. It is recommended that the Civil Aviation Authority encourages operators of aircraft fitted with three VHF units to have one tuned to frequency 121.5 MHz as a standard operating procedure. This will allow continuous monitoring of the emergency frequency, and provide a standby channel to facilitate contact with the aircraft. -