

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198903038**

Boeing 737

4 October 1989

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Investigations commenced on or before 30 June 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with Part 2A of the Air Navigation Act 1920.

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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.

Occurrence Number: 198903038
Location: Sydney NSW
Date: 4 October 1989
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Incident

Time: 1810

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0

Aircraft Details: Boeing 737
Registration: FG-FUA
Serial Number: N/K
Operation Type: Regular Public Transport
Damage Level: Nil
Departure Point: Melbourne Vic
Departure Time: N/K
Destination: Sydney NSW

Approved for Release: 22nd November 1989

Circumstances:

The aircraft was on charter to Australian Airlines operating as Flight Number AUS656. The aircraft was inbound to Sydney via the 07 Localiser. Approaching 7000 feet, on first contact with Sydney Approach South, the aircraft was instructed to descend to 4000 feet, not below the DME (Distance Measuring Equipment) steps. The DME Arrival Procedure indicates the aircraft should not descend below 5000 feet until 19 DME, to maintain separation from uncontrolled traffic below the DME steps. At 22 DME, the aircraft's altitude readout (on the Sydney Approach Radar) indicated, and was confirmed as, 4100 feet. There was no known traffic confliction. The DME Arrival Procedure for Sydney is not in accordance with ICAO Doc 8168- Ops/611 and may not be used by international operators. However, the aircraft was operating on a domestic flight plan, and only the three letter call sign and domestic flight number were on the flight progress strip held by the Sydney Approach Controller. Since this incident, the Civil Aviation Authority have issued an instruction that DME Arrival Procedures, which are not in accordance with ICAO standards, will not be issued as clearances to any aircraft, domestic or international.

Significant Factors:

The following factors were considered relevant to the development of the incident:

1. Inadequate data on flight progress strip.
2. Controller issued inappropriate clearance.