

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199800089**

**Boeing Co
B737**

11 January 1998

Readers are advised that the Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigates for the sole purpose of enhancing transport safety. Consequently, Bureau reports are confined to matters of safety significance and may be misleading if used for any other purposes.

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

Investigations commenced after 1 July 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the Executive Director of the Bureau in accordance with the Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003 (TSI Act). Reports released under the TSI Act are not admissible as evidence in any civil or criminal proceedings.

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: 199800089 **Occurrence Type:** Incident
Location: Melbourne, Aerodrome
State: VIC **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Sunday 11 January 1998
Time: 1426 hours **Time Zone** ESuT
Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Boeing Co
Manufacturer:
Aircraft Model: 737-376
Aircraft Registration: VH-TAF **Serial Number:** 23477
Type of Operation: Air Transport Domestic High Capacity Passenger
Scheduled
Damage to Aircraft: Nil
Departure Point: Melbourne Vic.
Departure Time: 1425 ESuT
Destination: Adelaide SA

Approved for Release: Tuesday, August 18, 1998

After the aircraft had commenced taxiing for takeoff the crew were advised that the aircraft had been loaded out of trim. The aircraft was returned to the gate while adjustments to the load were made.

To enable the aircraft to be loaded within the weight and balance limits the load control officer planned for a nil uplift in hold 4. A load instruction report was prepared indicating a nil uplift for hold 4, and was handed to the ramp leading hand.

After loading was completed the ramp leading hand presented a ramp clearance report to the load control officer. It was noted that twenty bags had been loaded into hold 4. Accordingly the load control officer recalculated the weight and balance, found that the aircraft was out of trim, and recalled the aircraft. The operators procedures require the ramp leading hand to advise the load control officer of any changes before the changes are made. These procedures were not followed and the company has initiated measures to improve discipline in the loading area.

The aircraft was operating under a new centralised load control system that allows the aircraft to be released from the gate prior to obtaining a final load clearance. The final loadsheet data is transmitted by radio to the aircraft and a hard copy is printed on the flight deck by the crew. System safety is assured as final loadsheet data cannot be transmitted by the load control officer until after the passenger and ramp clearances have been received and any loading adjustments made in the system. Also, the system will not produce a loadsheet if the weight or trim is outside limits, and the crew will not be able to configure the aircraft for takeoff without first having received the loadsheet data.