

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199702439**

**de Havilland Canada
Dash 8**

25 July 1997

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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: 199702439 **Occurrence Type:** Incident
Location: 74km S Port Macquarie, Aerodrome
State: NSW **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Friday 25 July 1997
Time: 0900 hours **Time Zone:** EST
Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Manufacturer: de Havilland Canada
Aircraft Model: DHC-8-201
Aircraft Registration: VH-TQG **Serial Number:** 430
Type of Operation: Air Transport Domestic Low Capacity Passenger Scheduled
Damage to Aircraft: Nil
Departure Point: Sydney NSW
Departure Time: 0832 EST
Destination: Port Macquarie NSW

Approved for Release: Monday, November 17, 1997

A Dash 8 had departed Sydney for Port Macquarie NSW. The crew was maintaining the aircraft at flight level 170 and reported that they were ready for descent. The sector 15 C controller issued instructions for the aircraft to leave controlled airspace on descent and for the crew to contact flight service for the portion of the flight to be conducted outside controlled airspace.

The boundary of controlled airspace was 12,500 ft and the crew contacted FIS 5 prior to that level. The flight service officer received the transmission but had not had any coordination on the flight from sector 15 C. Fortunately, there were no immediate traffic conflicts and the flight service officer had time to peruse his flight strips and pass relevant traffic information to the crew of the Dash 8.

The sector 15 C controller, who was under training, had not passed the flight details regarding the Dash 8 to FIS 5. However, a tick had been placed on the flight progress strip indicating that the coordination had been completed.

While the Dash 8 had been en-route, the military airspace under the control of Williamtown air traffic control became active and this action required coordination between sector 15 C and Williamtown control, which included information on the Dash 8. This activity resulted in a short-term, high workload situation involving several conversations with Williamtown air traffic control.

At approximately the same time, a second training officer prepared to take over the training responsibilities from the original training officer. This handover/takeover took place at the console with both officers "plugged in" to the monitor jacks. This had the effect of the second training officer being unable to hear anything through his headset until the first officer removed his headset from the jack.

The crew of the Dash 8 received their instruction to contact flight service immediately after the first training officer unplugged from the console and he did not hear this transmission. The second training officer looked at the flight progress strip as the instruction was being given and, seeing that the strip notation indicated that the coordination had been completed, believed all appropriate action had been taken.

Neither the first training officer nor the trainee could remember when or why the notation was made on the flight progress strip indicating the completion of the coordination with FIS 5 but, on reflection after the occurrence, the training officer remembered that it had not been done.

There was no breakdown in separation.

