

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199503014**

**Boeing Co
B747
Boeing Co
B737-400**

12 September 1995

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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 Executive Director 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.

The Bureau did not conduct an on scene investigation of this occurrence. The information presented below was obtained from information supplied to the Bureau.

Occurrence Number:	199503014	Occurrence Type:	Incident
Location:	99km NW Atega, (IFR)		
State:	NT	Inv Category:	4
Date:	Tuesday 12 September 1995		
Time:	1535 hours	Time Zone	EST
Highest Injury Level:	None		
Aircraft Manufacturer:	Boeing Co		
Aircraft Model:	747-338		
Aircraft Registration:	VH-EBW	Serial Number:	23408
Type of Operation:	Air Transport High Capacity International Passenger Scheduled		
Damage to Aircraft:	Nil		
Departure Point:	Brisbane QLD		
Departure Time:			
Destination:	Singapore		
Aircraft Manufacturer:	Boeing Co		
Aircraft Model:	737-476		
Aircraft Registration:	VH-TJF	Serial Number:	24431
Type of Operation:	Air Transport Domestic High Capacity Passenger Scheduled		
Damage to Aircraft:	Nil		
Departure Point:	Darwin NT		
Departure Time:			
Destination:	Brisbane QLD		

Approved for Release: Friday, October 18, 1996

A Boeing B737 was operating a scheduled flight from Darwin to Brisbane via route A464. The aircraft passed overhead Tindal at 1455, maintaining FL330, estimating the ATEGA waypoint (150 NM north-west of Mount Isa) at 1549. The aircraft was subsequently transferred from Brisbane ATC Sector 11K jurisdiction to Brisbane Sector 11 at 1515. Opposite direction traffic on A464 was a Boeing B747, operating a scheduled flight from Brisbane to Singapore. The aircraft passed overhead Mount Isa at 1430, maintaining FL310, estimating Tindal at 1613, and requesting a flight planned climb to FL350. The aircraft subsequently contacted Brisbane Sector 11 at ATEGA at 1525.

The Sector 11 controller had calculated an estimated time of passing of 1538 for both aircraft and correctly notated both flight progress strips. The B747 was co-ordinated to Sector 11K with the current and planned cruising levels. However, at about 1528, Sector 11 cleared the B747 to climb to FL350. At 1535, the B747 reported maintaining FL350 but one minute later queried opposite direction traffic below. The Sector 11 controller immediately recognised that the prescribed separation standards had not been provided and the B747 had climbed through the level of the B737 about five minutes, or 80 NM, prior to the time of passing.

A subsequent investigation found that the Sector 11 controller had been distracted by resolving a potential separation problem between two other aircraft within his area of responsibility. In addition, he had erroneously judged that all southbound traffic was below the B747, prior to issuing the climb clearance, although the relevant flight progress information available to him did not support this perception. A final opportunity to prevent the occurrence was lost when the crew of the B737 had apparently not recognised that the B747 had been cleared to climb through their level without adequate separation. The B737 had been on the same frequency as the B747 for some 10 mins prior to ATEGA.

