

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199301553**

**Saab Aircraft AB  
SF-340A  
British Aerospace Plc  
BAe 146-300**

**27 May 1993**

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](http://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:** 199301553                      **Occurrence Type:** Incident  
**Location:** 75km SE Melbourne  
**State:** VIC    **Inv Category:** 4  
**Date:** Thursday 27 May 1993  
**Time:** 0950 hours                                      **Time Zone** EST  
**Highest Injury Level:** None

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** British Aerospace Plc  
**Aircraft Model:** BAe 146-300  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-EWL    **Serial Number:** E3177  
**Type of Operation:** Air Transport Domestic High Capacity Passenger Scheduled  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Nil  
**Departure Point:** Melbourne VIC  
**Departure Time:** 0846 EST  
**Destination:** Hobart TAS

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** Saab Aircraft AB  
**Aircraft Model:** SF-340A  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-KDK    **Serial Number:** 16  
**Type of Operation:** Air Transport Domestic Low Capacity Passenger Scheduled  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Nil  
**Departure Point:** Melbourne VIC  
**Departure Time:** 0842 EST  
**Destination:** Devonport TAS

**Approved for Release:**

Three aircraft were scheduled to depart Melbourne via the 150 radial. VH-KDK and VH-WZI were vectored left of track to allow the faster aircraft, VH-EWL, to safely overtake both of them. A small closing speed existed between VH-KDK and VH-WZI but normal climb performance was such that vertical separation could be expected before radar separation approached minima.

The Departures controller in training decided to place VH-KDK back on pilot navigation by instructing the pilot to track direct to Cowes. This resulted in VH-KDK and VH-EWL now being on gradual converging tracks. The trainee thought that VH-EWL would have drawn in front before both aircraft were back on track. In this configuration the aircraft were handed off to the receiving Inner Sector radar controller who was made aware of the converging aircraft and the possible need to alter one of the aircrafts tracks at a later stage. The Inner Sector controller knew that while the separation minima inside 30 miles was three miles, this increased to 5 miles further out. His judgement was that immediate action was not required but that separation needed to be monitored.

The Inner Sector controller became distracted when VH-WZI had not made a radio call when transferred from Departures as well as being distracted by other traffic in the Ballarat/Yarrowee area. When he returned his attention to the convergence of VH-KDK and VH-EWL these aircraft were beyond 30 miles from Melbourne but with only three miles lateral separation. A turn was initiated and the required five miles separation was established.

### Significant Factors

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

1. The Inner Sector radar controller was distracted by other aircraft.
  2. The Inner Sector radar controllers scanning of the traffic under his control was inadequate.
  3. The Inner Sector radar controller did not ensure that the aircraft remained adequately separated.
-