



AIB Bulletin

AIB Bulletin No. 1/00 **Ref.:** CAV/ACC/1/00 **Category:** 1.1
Aircraft Type & Reg. Boeing 707 -351C ST-APY **Serial No.** 19412
No. & type of Engines: 4 Pratt & Whitney JT 3D
Year of Manufacture: 1967
Date and Time (UTC): 3 February 2000 at 1736hrs
Location: Lake Victoria, Mwanza 4km short of Rwy 12 [0227 S 03256 E]
Type of Flight: Air Charter, Cargo
Persons on Board: Crew - 5 Passengers - Nil
Injuries: Crew - Nil Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage: All engines ripped off, damage to both wings. Nose landing Gear separated taking with it much of the forward lower fuselage structure
Commander's Licence: NOT KNOWN
Commander's Age: NOT KNOWN
Commander's Experience: NOT KNOWN

Information Source: Telephone call from Mwanza Air Traffic Services.

HISTORY OF THE FLIGHT

The accident was notified by the Mwanza Air Traffic Services shortly after it occurred. The AIB inspectors travelled to the site of the accident on the following day. However, the crew could not be interviewed because they left Mwanza for Nairobi before the inspectors arrived at Mwanza. They also took with them all the aircraft documents except the weather reports, which were left in the cockpit.

The aircraft was operating a charter flight from Khartoum to Mwanza for the purpose of uplifting some cargo of fish fillet bound for Brussels. It was carrying a crew of five.

ST - APY first raised contact with the Mwanza Tower at 1658 hours and reported ETA Mwanza 1715 hours, FL 370 descending to FL 250. The aircraft was advised that at that time there was no power at Mwanza airport but efforts were being made to use a standby generator.

The Bulletin contains facts relating to the accident which have been determined up to the time of issue. This information is published to inform the public and the aviation industry of the general circumstances of the accidents at the preliminary/stage and must necessarily be regarded as tentative and subject to alteration or correction if additional evidence becomes available.

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After holding for 10 minutes the airport generator came on line and the runway was lighted. ST - APY subsequently commenced a visual approach to runway 12. At 1728 hours the captain reported turning final runway 12 and a landing clearance was given.

The aircraft made a normal visual approach to runway 12. When it came close to the point where it was expected to touch down it was observed to overshoot after which it made a left turn. When he was asked by the controller whether he had any problems the commander replied "no problem" and added that he could not make a landing - so he was trying another approach. *[In a written statement which was left in the Mwanza Tower the pilot explained that the aircraft "seemed high" so they executed a go around].*

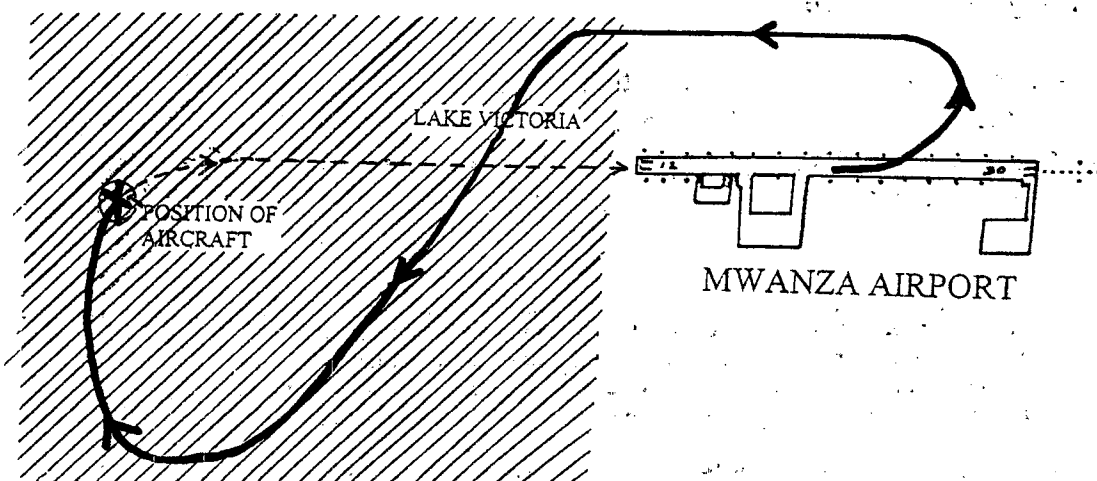
The controller advised the commander to try runway 30 since the wind was calm and runway 30 had approach lights. However, the commander chose to use runway 12 again.

The aircraft was then observed to proceed on a left base for runway 12. It executed a left base turn for runway 12 but could not come out aligned properly and therefore proceeded to continue for a wider right base turn for runway 12. As it did so the aircraft appeared to sway from side to side.

When asked what was the problem the commander replied: "no problem - will report final runway 12". Then he made a right turn and proceeded to a long final for runway 12. He started to align himself for the runway but the aircraft appeared to be very unstable and was pointing in the direction of the Mwanza airport terminal building.

Some people who were watching the approaching aircraft became so frightened that they ran outside the terminal building. One person was injured.

According to the controller, the aircraft subsequently descended very low over the lake and came close to the water level while it was still far from the threshold of runway 12. He cautioned the pilot over the height but there was no reply. Moments later, he saw the aircraft fall into the lake with a bang.



The commander reported that whilst executing another approach and with the runway ahead and slightly to the left the aircraft suddenly hit something. There was a lot of noise and the aircraft came to a stand still. They shut down the engines and fired the fire bottles.

Some fishermen who were in the lake and at the nearby fishing village said that they saw the aircraft making a turn and then heard two loud bangs. They sailed in the direction of the plane and were assisted by SOS flash messages from crew torches.

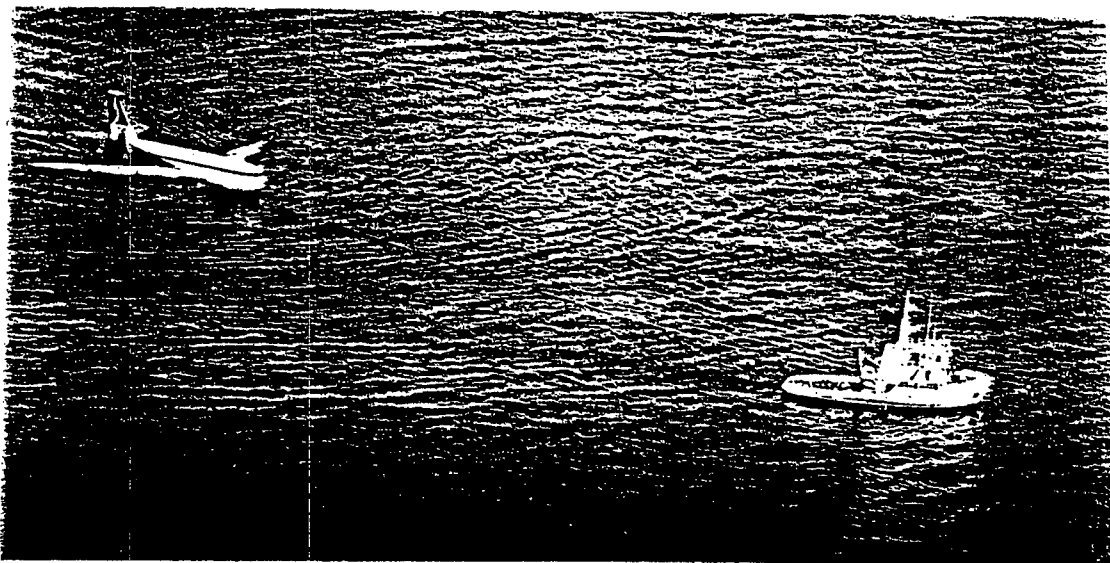
Two of the crew members were found swimming to the shore. The remaining three were found standing on the aircraft wing, with their bags. They all wore life jackets.

Apart from fuel leakage into the lake, no other third party damage (or injuries) were reported. All the boats operating in the lake area were accounted for by the fishing community. No persons were reported missing.

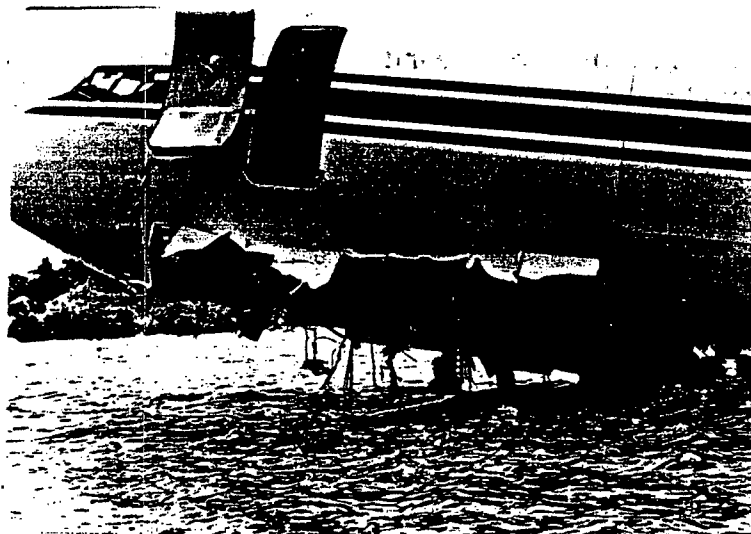
EXAMINATION OF THE WRECKAGE

The aircraft came to rest in the lake about 4km short of runway 12. There was no fire. On the following day some 18 hours after the accident it had drifted further in the waters and was 11.6 km on bearing 290° from the threshold of the runway. It was floating freely with the tail section partly submerged but the forward fuselage was standing at an angle, clear of the water.

The aircraft was later towed to a position close to the shore. There was fuel leakage and the surrounding waters were contaminated with fuel.



All the four engines and their pylons had been ripped off the wings by the impact with water and the surrounding wing leading edge structures were damaged. The wing flaps which were in the landing configuration were also extensively damaged. The nose landing gear was torn from its mounting and took with it much of the lower forward fuselage structure including most of the equipment in the electronics bay. The damage to the main landing gear could not be assessed because it was still below the water surface. Also for this reason the two recorders (if installed) could not be reached.



Examination of the cockpit showed nothing untoward for the landing configuration and the subsequent emergency drill. The only notable feature was that the commander's altimeter was reading 4100feet while that of the co-pilot had the correct elevation of Lake Victoria - 3720feet. Since the pilots were not available for interview, it was not possible to assess how this disagreement in the readings was accounted for.

MWANZA AIRPORT

Mwanza airport, elevation 3763feet has one runway 12/30 which is 3300metres long and 45metres wide. The surface is tarmac and was in very good condition at the time of the accident. The NDB and the PAPI were serviceable but the latter had recently been re-installed and had not been flight checked. The VOR was unserviceable. The weather at Mwanza was described as good with no wind. The airport is equipped with a standby generator which was working at the time of the accident.

FURTHER WORK

Further work is now in progress with the purpose of towing the aircraft to the shore and to defuel it. The FDR and the CVR, if installed, should then be recovered.

The operator of the aircraft has now notified this Department that the accident crew are available for interview at a date to be arranged with him.

Further investigations into the circumstances of this accident are continuing.