Emergency and Abnormal Situations in Aviation: The Role of the Dispatcher

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The Challenge

Emergency and abnormal situations:
- are often time critical, complex, and/or ambiguous
- are high stress, high workload, and a great deal is at stake
- require exceptionally high levels of coordination inside and outside of the airplane

Emergency and abnormal procedures:
- are generally focused on aircraft systems rather than on the situation as a whole
- are practiced seldom (twice a year or less) and used rarely
- are often highly dependent on fragile cognitive processes
- when needed, are crucial and must be performed correctly
### Industry Contacts and Consultants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manufacturers:</th>
<th>Boeing, Airbus Industries, BAE Systems</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Agencies:</td>
<td>FAA, CAA (UK), ICAO</td>
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<td>Unions and Trade Groups:</td>
<td>ALPA, APA, SWAPA, ATA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accident Investigation Bodies:</td>
<td>NTSB, TSB of Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Airlines:</td>
<td>Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, Continental Airlines, American Airlines, Fed Ex, Aloha Airlines, Hawaiian Airlines, Air Canada, Cathay Pacific, Airborne Express, UPS, US Airways, TWA (prior to merger)</td>
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Emergency and Abnormal Situations Project
Taxonomy of the Domain

15 Different Categories of Issues:

- Broad, Over-arching Issues (3)
- Issues Related to Checklists and Procedures (3)
- Issues Related to Humans (5)
- Issues Related to the Aircraft (2)
- Issues Related to Training (1)
- Selected Emergency Equipment and Evacuation Issues (1)
Emergency and Abnormal Situations Project
Taxonomy of the Domain

Broad, Over-arching Issues

- Philosophies
- Economic and Regulatory Pressures
- Definitions & Perspectives
Philosophy of Response to Emergencies

Evident in Checklist Design
### AIR CONDITIONING SMOKE

**NO SMOKE DECREASES**

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
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<td>ECON P/B</td>
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**NO SMOKE DECREASES**

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**NO SMOKE DECREASES**

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>PACK 3</td>
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**NO SMOKE DECREASES**

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<tr>
<td>1 - 3 ISOL</td>
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**NO SMOKE DECREASES**

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<td>1 - 2 ISOL</td>
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**END**

**NO SMOKE DECREASES**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PACK 2</td>
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Smokes are not of air conditioning origin. Refer to EMERGENCY Procedure - SMOKE / FUMES OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN.

**END**
If smoke/fumes are not eliminated, land at nearest suitable airport
In a study of 15 in-flight fires that occurred between January 1967 and September 1998, the TSB of Canada determined that the average amount of time between the detection of an on-board fire and when the aircraft ditched, conducted a forced landing, or crashed was 17 minutes.
Response to Emergencies:

Job Responsibilities
Influence Perspectives and Behavior
DISPATCH: ...If uh you want to land at LA of course for safety reasons we will do that uh wu we’ll uh tell you though that if we land in LA uh we’ll be looking at probably an hour to an hour and a half we have a major flow program going right now uh that’s for ATC back in San Francisco
LA-OPS: ok also uh….just be advised uh because you’re an international arrival we have to get landing rights. I don’t know how long that’s gonna take me…but uh I have to clear it all through customs first.
MX: yea did you try the suitcase handles and the pickle switches, right?  
CA: yea we tried everything together, uh...we’ve run just about everything... 
MX: um yea I just wanted to know if you tried the pickles switches and the suitcase handles to see if it was movin in with any of the uh other switches other than the uh suitcase handles alone or nothing 
CA: yea we tried just about every iteration 
MX: and alternate’s inop too huh? 
CA: yup, its just it appears to be jammed the uh the whole thing it spikes out when we use the primary. We got AC load that tells me the motor’s tryin to run but the brake won’t move it when we use the alternate. Nothing happens
Dispatchers – Movement and scheduling of aircraft
Operations Agents – Take care of logistics related to landing
Maintenance Personnel – Fix broken airplanes

All were trying to do their jobs as they normally do them.

Very hard to set aside the mindset for normal mode of operations, recognize and communicate the severity of a situation, and to put all other considerations aside to get the airplane safely on the ground.
15 Different Categories of Issues:

- Broad, Over-arching Issues
- Issues Related to Checklists and Procedures
- Issues Related to Humans
- Issues Related to the Aircraft
- Issues Related to Training
- Selected Emergency Equipment and Evacuation Issues
Checklist and Procedures Issues

Development of Checklists and Procedures

Checklist Structure and Design

Checklist Type and Availability

• Difficulty raising gear after takeoff from Atlanta

• Crew used UNABLE TO RAISE GEAR LEVER procedure in the QRH

• While still climbing, crew realized cabin pressurization and takeoff warning systems were still in the ground mode

• Crew pulled the ground control relay circuit breakers, as directed by same QRH checklist, to place systems in flight mode

• Later portion of the checklist directed the crew to reset the circuit breakers which they did on final approach approximately 100 feet (30.5 meters) above the ground

• Ground spoilers deployed, aircraft hit the ground very hard, nose wheel separated from the aircraft
**QRH**

**UNABLE TO RAISE GEAR LEVER**

NOSE STEERING WHEEL .................. OPERATE (C)

If steering wheel does NOT turn and centering
indices are aligned:
Indicates a malfunction of the anti-retraction
mechanism.

If desired, retract landing gear:
GEAR HANDLE RELEASE BUTTON .......... PUSH (PNF)
GEAR LEVER .................................. UP (PNF)

If steering wheel turns:
DO NOT RETRACT THE GEAR.

Indicates ground shift mechanism is still in the ground
mode.

No auto-pressurization, and takeoff warning horn will
sound when flaps/gear are retracted.

The ground control relay electrical circuits can be placed
in the flight mode by pulling the Ground Control Relay
Circuit breakers (H20 and J20).

Do not exceed VLE (300 kts/M.70).

**Approach and landing:**

If landing gear was not retracted prior to landing,
ground spoilers must be operated manually.

AIRPLANE .................................. DEPRESSURIZE (PNF)

ANTI-SKID SWITCH (before 90 kts) .......... OFF (PNF)

GROUND CONTROL RELAY CBs (if pulled)
(H20 and J20) .................................. RESET (C or FO)

**AOM**

**UNABLE TO RAISE GEAR LEVER**

NOTE
Indicates possible malfunction of ground shift.

**Approach and landing:**

If landing gear was not retracted prior to landing,
ground spoilers must be operated manually.

AIRPLANE .................................. DEPRESSURIZE (PNF)

ANTI-SKID SWITCH (before 30 kts) .......... OFF (PNF)

During landing rollout and prior to 30 kts,
momentarily release brakes and place Anti-skid
switch to OFF.

GROUND CONTROL RELAY CBs (if pulled)
(H20 and J20) .................................. RESET (C or FO)

During taxi and verify that circuits are in the
ground mode.
SECTION 3-1

ONE ENGINE INOPERATIVE LANDING

- Plan a flaps 15 landing
- Minimum VREF 15 + 5 on final approach

DESCENT - APPROACH

ANTI-ICE ......................... AS REQUIRED
TCAS MODE SELECTOR ................ T/A ONLY
ENG START SWITCH (Operating ENG) .......... ON
ALTIMETER & INST ................ SET & CHECKED
*EPR & IAS BUGS ...... CHECKED & SET, VREF 15

NOTE If additional Go-Around thrust is desired accomplish the following below 10,000 ft:

ISOLATION VALVE .................. CLOSE
NO 1 ENG BLD AIR SW .............. OFF
APU BLD AIR SW .................. ON

CAUTION Do not open the APU bleed valve if the ENG FIRE LIGHT remains illuminated:

NO 2 ENG BLEED AIR SW .......... OFF
(Add .03 to Go-Around EPR)

GROUND PROX .................. INHIBIT
FUEL .................. BALANCE
15 Different Categories of Issues:

- Broad, Over-arching Issues
- Issues Related to Checklists and Procedures
- **Issues Related to Humans**
- Issues Related to the Aircraft
- Issues Related to Training
- Selected Emergency Equipment and Evacuation Issues
Emergency and Abnormal Situations Project

Taxonomy of the Domain

Issues Related to Humans

- Crew Coordination & Response
- Checklist Use
- Human Performance
- Personnel Issues
- Roles and Behavior of Others
  - Cabin Crew
  - ATC
  - Dispatch
  - Maintenance
  - ARFF
  - etc.
DC-10 In-flight Fire – Newburgh, New York – September 5, 1996

- During cruise at 33,000 ft (10058.4 meters) cabin/cargo smoke warning light illuminated – the FO was the PF

- FE announced the memory items and then began to complete the printed SMOKE AND FIRE checklist

- The FE, without input from the CA, completed the checklist branch for “If Descent is NOT Required”
DC-10 FLIGHT MANUAL

FIRE & SMOKE

1. Oxygen Mask & Smoke Goggles (As Required)

2. Crew & Courier Communications
   Check Mike switches to MASK, place cockpit speaker ON, place MIC SEL switch to FLT INT, and establish crew communication.

3. Cockpit Door & Smoke Screen
   Close the cockpit door & smoke screen to exclude heavy concentrations of smoke. Leave door closed unless opening it is dictated by a greater emergency, and then at Captain’s discretion.

4. If Descent is required
   PROCEED TO STEP 6

5. If Descent is NOT Required
   PROCEED TO STEP 14

WARNING

Should structural damage be suspected, limit airspeed. Gear and/or Speed Brakes may be used depending on type of damage.

6. Autopilot
   AS REQUIRED

7. Throttles
   IDLE

8. Speed Brake
   FULL

9. Airspeed
   MACH .82 TO .85 (320 TO 350 KIAS)

NOTE

If structural damage is known or suspected, use appropriate turbulence penetration speed.

10. ATC
    NOTIFY

11. Transponder (if no contact with ATC)
    7700

12. Tank Pumps
    ALL ON

13. Altimeter
    SET

14. Type Of Smoke Or Fire
    DETERMINE & PROCEED TO APPROPRIATE PROCEDURE, THIS CHAPTER

   A. ELECTRICAL FIRE & SMOKE
      Can best be determined by smell or visible smoke from electrical components (e.g., circuit breaker, radio)

   B. AIRCONDITIONING SMOKE
      Can best be recognized by smoke emanating from overhead air conditioning outlets.

   C. CABIN CARGO SMOKE
      Can best be recognized by checking smoke detectors on the Second Officers panel, or by observing smoke or fire in the main deck cargo area.

(End of Procedure)
• CA requested a descent and diversion 3 ½ minutes after the warning light illuminated

• The FE skipped two steps on the second checklist he completed: CABIN/CARGO SMOKE LIGHT ILLUMINATED
1. Pack Function Control Selectors: TWO PACKS OFF

**NOTE**
Operate the No. 1 Pack only, if available.

2. Cockpit Air Outlets: OPEN
3. Courier Masks & Goggles: VERIFY CN/100%
4. Airplane Altitude: CAPTAIN’S DISCRETION
   - A. Land as soon as possible.
   - B. If above FL 270, consider descent to FL 270. Manually raise cabin altitude to 25,000 ft.
   - C. If below FL 270, and an immediate landing is not possible, climb to FL 270. Manually raise cabin altitude to 25,000 ft. using the MANUAL CAB ALT control wheel.

5. If unable To Extinguish Fire/Smoke: MANUALLY RAISE CABIN ALTITUDE TO 25,000 FEET

6. Cabin Air Shutoff T-Handle: FULL
7. Maintain 0.5 PSI Diff Pressure Below FL 270, Or 25,000 Ft. Cabin Altitude Above FL 270.
8. Fire: CHECK EXTINGUISHED

**NOTE**
Restricted articles container is designed to be "relatively" air tight so that any fire which may start inside will quickly consume all available oxygen. Depressurizing airplane will further deny oxygen to fire and should result in adequate fire control.

**CAUTION**
No crewmember should leave the cockpit to fight a fire except when it is determined that the fire is accessible and then only when measures already taken have not been effective. In addition, do not open restricted articles container during flight when a fire within is known or suspected.

9. If It Is Necessary To Leave The Cockpit To Fight A Fire:
   - A. Protective Breathing Equipment: DON’ACTIVATE

**NOTE**
The PBE is located in a container in the coat closet and should be worn when fighting an actual fire. The walk-around O₂ bottle is also available in the cockpit.
   - B. Fire extinguisher: OBTAIN
   - C. Fire or smoke source: EXTINGUISH

10. Land At Nearest Suitable Airport.

(End of Procedure)

20 March 1994
• The emergency descent checklist was not called for or completed

• Upon landing, the aircraft was still partially pressurized and the crew’s evacuation of the aircraft was impeded and delayed

• The crew did not complete the Evacuation Checklist
The CA showed signs of being overloaded:
- Emergency descent was delayed
- Never called for any checklists to be completed
- Did not adequately monitor the FE’s completion of checklists
- Mistakenly transmitted his remarks to the crew over the ATC frequency

The CA was very busy:
- Monitoring the spread of the fire
- Communicating with ATC
- Trying to coordinate their diversion and emergency descent
- Monitoring the flying pilot (FO)
- Concerned with testing the fire detection system
- Interactions with the FE
The FE showed signs of being overloaded:
- Missed items on checklists
- Five times over the span of almost six minutes, he asked for the 3-letter identifier of the airport they were diverting to
- Did not adequately monitor the status of the aircraft pressurization

The FE was very busy:
- Selecting and completing emergency checklists and procedures
- Trying to determine data and Vref speeds needed for landing
- Completing normal approach and landing checklists
- Monitoring the progress of the fire
- Working with the CA to test the fire detection system
Emergency and Abnormal Situations Project
Taxonomy of the Domain

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Issues Related to the Aircraft

- Critical Aircraft Systems
- Automation Issues
25 seconds after departing Stockholm the right engine surged

The left engine surged 39 seconds later

77 seconds into the flight both engines lost power

Grey smoke filled the cockpit and the crew attempted an emergency landing using only back-up instruments as the EFIS screens were blank

Despite the aircraft breaking into 3 pieces on landing, all 129 on board survived
On liftoff, clear ice was broken off the wings and ingested by the engines, damaging the fan stages. This damage lead to the engines surging.

Without the crew noticing, engine power was increased automatically through the effect of Automatic Thrust Restoration (ATR) which caused an increase in the intensity of the surging and contributed to the failure of the engines.

The airline company had no knowledge of ATR.
Issues Related to Training
Procedures and checklists worked well, but we did not don goggles (and ended up not needing them). The thing about goggles is they must be donned first – before the mask!

But procedures training and habit all result in donning the mask first. Then if the goggles are required, the mask has to be removed. ‘Smoke Procedures’ should call for goggles first without analysis for need.
Selected Equipment and Evacuation Issues
• Nearing the final approach fix the engine and alert display (EAD) indicated that the left generator had failed

• The display units (DU) and standby instruments went dark and then began flashing off and on

• The crew then noticed a burning smell in the cockpit

• The forward flight attendants also noticed a burning smell in the cabin and determined the handset used to make announcements and contact the cockpit was inoperative

• After landing the lead flight attendant tried banging on the cockpit door and speaking loudly to get the attention of the flight crew
The flight crew did not hear the flight attendant banging on the door or speaking loudly.
Emergency and Abnormal Situations Project
Taxonomy of the Domain
Goal

Develop guidance for procedure development and certification, training, crew coordination, and situation management based on knowledge of the operational environment, human performance limitations, and cognitive vulnerabilities in real-world situations.
Products and Deliverables

Intermediate Products:
Reports, Articles, Papers, Presentations

End Products:

Field Guides for
• Training Entities and Instructors
• Operators
• Manufacturers
• Regulatory Agencies
(Certification, POIs)
EAS Project Team

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What Are We Missing?

How Can We Learn from You and Your Experiences?

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