

***Final Landing* – foreword by Sidney Dekker**

Where there is mostly only one so-called ‘first story’ of an accident (it was ‘human error’!), there can be innumerable ‘second stories.’ These are stories that go beyond the labels and attributions of the first story. Second stories dig deeper, they peel away layer after layer. They are not guided by searches for someone to blame or to prematurely find ‘closure’ about what happened, but instead driven by a relentless curiosity and discover more—with each discovery typically generating new questions to pursue. Second stories assemble different bits and pieces into a narrative that makes sense, a narrative that shows the technologies, organizations, goal conflicts, resource constraints and the workings of outcome and hindsight biases behind that facile label of ‘human error.’

As Pedro Fernandes writes, this is his story, which exists next to many other second stories of the Faro accident—some already written, many not, or not yet. As head of the safety management system at Faro airport, his perspective is guaranteed to have been unique, and detailed, and full of data, knowledge and insights not available to others. Fernandes is a man with an unremitting curiosity and a golden heart—not only is he deeply compassionate toward the many ‘second victims’ this accident created (including the pilots and air traffic controllers, firefighters and other first responders); he is donating the proceeds of the book to the Red Cross which assisted so valiantly in the aftermath of the accident.

No second story can ever claim the ‘truth’ of having found out what ‘really’ happened (though journalists sometimes like you to believe this). The world is too complex for that, and history too unknown, diverse and messy. Second stories, all of them, provide accounts assembled and written from a particular perspective. They are only partially overlapping and contradictory in places. That is what complexity does. It doesn’t make the second story (or stories) untrue. It makes them interesting, fascinating, and worthwhile to read. ‘Final Landing’ is likely not the ‘final word’ on the Faro crash (as there won’t ever be a ‘final word’), but that is precisely what makes it such a fascinating, worthwhile second story.