

Meteorological flight preparation

In my biased way I read in the investigation report that the Portuguese investigators doubt the, mandatory, presence of the captain of flight MP495 at the Meteo Centre of Schiphol airport prior to departure to Faro.

In a roundabout way the presence of the captain at the Meteo Centre is made probable: the presence of two Martinair crew members is admitted, the F.E. was not present, ergo the captain must have been present.

This reasoning does not take into account that about the same time as flight MP495 there was another Martinair flight to Faro. This crew will have been present at the Meteo Center as well.

For specific information, see below the relevant text in the non-official English translation of the investigation report.

In case of conflicting text, the Portuguese report is the valid document

1.7.2 Meteorological Conditions

1.7.2.1 Meteorological information gathered by the crew at Amsterdam

The Meteorological information delivered to the crew at Amsterdam was not recovered from the aircraft wreckage.

A copy of the Faro Airport meteorological information, available at the date of the accident in the Amsterdam Airport Meteo Centre was requested from NAIB.

The Meteorologist on duty at Amsterdam Meteo Centre in the early hours of 21 DEC 92, when confronted with a photo of the captain admitted that the same had not been present at the centre. As the F.E. declared that he had not gone to the Meteo Centre, and only two crew members of Martinair had been at the centre on that dawn, the same could only have been the captain and copilot of flight MP 495, as declared by themselves.

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1.17.1.2 Operational procedures.

The company has a flight operations manual (BIM) and a DC-10 aircraft operations manual where the company operational procedures are stated.

The following procedures are emphasized as they concern the investigation:

1.17.1.3 Martinair Flight Operations Manual (BIM).

On section 1 it is interesting to emphasize paragraph 1.2.5-03 which establishes as mandatory for the Captain to be briefed on meteorology before each flight.