

Hello,

It is good to know that, nobody skidded off the Earth, and little birds are still singing.

After some more digging, I came across some Forum file re. Swissair 111 and related accidents, containing remarks by Capt. T.S. (Tony Snelgar) Since I am not certain you have that already, it is attached. It also contains remarks on ditching a jet – a/c, which can be regarded as a last desperate manoeuvre of people who have run out of options. Ditching a propeller driven a/c offers better chances of survival, however, at night time with reduced or no visibility, it is in any case a last, desperate try.

Further, I finally got some approach charts (attached) for FIMP/ MRU, which prompted me to have still another look at the final moments of the flight. Although these charts are from 2004, I assume that, the procedure was the same in 1987. For 1987 the DCA-Report (page 14) lists radio nav.-aids, which are shown on the 2004 charts as follows:

VOR at Plaisance(PLS),
Grand Bay (GBY)

DME at Plaisance(PLS),
Grand Bay (GBY)

NDB at Flic en Flac (FF), 100 nm range
Plaisance (MS), 300 nm range.

The attached mru approach b.gif is a try to align the info from the 2004 charts (FIMP.pdf), the MRU ATC Transcript, and the wreckage site(s). Calculations are based on an average ground speed of 360 kts, which of course leads to some margins re. times and positions, but within reasonable limits. A position error of 5 nm is assumed (CEP / shaded areas).

Unless proven otherwise, the toy car and the pipe, still are of significance, because:

- 1.) SAA-engineer H.Viljoen identified the pipe as being from a jet engine,
- 2.) ***The relevant page of Mr. E.Potgieter's report, which records the finding of these two items, is missing.***
(Having worked with Mr.P., I got to know him as a meticulous, orderly person, his report would not be a loose leaf affair, therefore, that particular page is not "missing", but is has been deliberately removed for some reason.)
- 3.) So far, only three jet engines are reported to have been found.

Going through the MRU ATC comms with 295, five distinct "chapters" can be identified:

1. Report Emergency
2. Instrument Navigation
3. Clearance and weather info
4. Runway and Approach Procedure
5. The End

1. Report Emergency

Although being in an emergency situation, he still believes to be in control.

2. Instrument Navigation

His mind is focused on instrument nav., electrics, avionics. Consequently he relates his position to radio nav.-aids, intending to follow normal approach procedure, i.e. via FF NDB, which is about 25 nm or approx. five minutes longer than a direct approach using RWY 32, in order to get down as fast as possible. **He does not report crossing 60 E, as per his ETA of 23:13Z to be at 23:58 Z, neither does he report passing point GUTKO. Despite instruments dying, he still believes he can manage.**

3. Clearance and weather info

Still normal comms.

4. Runway and Approach Procedure

ATC and a/c still intend to follow normal procedure, approach via FF NDB.

He never reported approaching or leveling at FL 50.

Sometime around 00:03 Z and 00:04 Z something must have happened that rendered the a/c uncontrollable, and this is in the vicinity of the toy car and the pipe.

All this of course can not bring any light as to what started the fire. **It appears that, the fire started more or less exactly 9 hours after reaching cruising altitude, or stable cabin pressure.**

14: 23 Z Take off

14: 23 / 53 Z adjusting cabin pressure (?)

14: 53 Z Cruising altitude reached 30 min after take off (approx.)

23: 35 / 40 Z Fire starts ?

23: 49 Z Report smoke problem on board

A pressure differential triggered timer, and that is an intentionally set fire, is a possibility that can not be discounted off hand, especially in view of other circumstantial evidence and irregularities regarding this flight.

Regards