

Capt. Brenner – Pilot In Command?

SPIA Boeing 707-321

PGUM/PHNL

Departed Guam on schedule for Honolulu with a nearly full passenger load. I was still in training as a flight engineer and sat in the observer's seat for this 8-hour flight. We were only out of Guam for about an hour when we developed an engine problem which resulted in shutting down the engine. The Boeing 707 losing an engine was not in itself a big problem. The other three engines would keep the aircraft aloft very well. The proper procedure would be to turn around and return to Guam. That was not the procedure that was followed on this particular flight.

Capt. Brenner stated that he hated Guam and did not want to go back. He would fly all the way to Honolulu on three engines. Procedure also mandated that a lower flight level be flown which was done. The problem was fuel management. The three engines at a higher power setting would indeed burn more fuel than four at the proper setting for cruise. The lower altitude would also increase the fuel burn. The Co-Pilot and Flight Engineer both were advising the captain to return to Guam. I may have still been in training, but I knew what the proper procedure should be in this instance, but my voice was not included in the cockpit discussion. The engineer performed his magic with stretching every mile out of the fuel on board. It was a long night heading east to Hawaii.

As we approached Honolulu, everyone was a little tense knowing that we were indeed low on fuel. The captain was informed that he must ensure a landing for a missed approach or go around would not be in the cards. The fuel tanks have been depleted and we were not sure how the three engines were still operating.

The captain requested that the tower alert crash rescue. They asked if he was declaring an emergency, "No he just wanted them in case". The engine out was enough to declare an emergency or request crash rescue, but he didn't want to raise concerns about the engine out... because it was out for a long time and certainly should have returned to Guam.

Crash rescue was lined up on runway upon arrival and we landed without incident and even taxied to the assigned gate. Upon arrival, the flight engineer and I

dropped the wing fuel sticks to get a positive direct reading of fuel remaining. We confirmed that a go around would not have been accomplished if required.

I do not recall that there was ever a formal issue with this flight. The flight left Guam and safely arrived at the gate in Honolulu.

I completed my flight engineering training and was assigned to the schedule but was not eager to fly with Capt. Brenner. What else will I learn about SPIA in the months ahead.

When I heard about the N144SP-4/13/87 accident and ultimately read the NTSB report, I was not surprised. The probable cause was the captain's intentional descent below the published decision height as well as the breakdown of flight crew coordination procedure.

Sounded too familiar.

Tom Anusewicz

(I will add additional info when I find my personal flight log for this flight)