

A lack of workload resilience in a non-radar environment

by HindSight Editorial Staff

The SKYbrary Accident and Incident Library contains over 750 articles summarising selected accidents and serious incidents which have been independently investigated, each one of which is linked to a copy of the full Official Investigation Report. Some involve controller workload issues, especially high workload relative to the capacity of an individual controller. Here is a short summary of one of these based on the findings of the Investigation. The finding relating to workload and the ability of the controller involved to cope with it based on their experience level and training was accepted as a formal 'Safety Issue' and dealt with by the ANSP involved.

In January 2012, ATC error resulted in two aircraft on procedural clearances in oceanic airspace, an A320 and an A340, crossing the same waypoint in the Eastern Indian Ocean within an estimated 2 minutes of each other without the prescribed 1000 feet vertical separation required when there was less than 15 minutes between them. By the time ATC identified the loss of separation and sent a CPDLC message to the A340 to descend in order to restore separation, the crew advised that such action was already being taken.

The Investigation identified various organisational deficiencies relating to the provision of procedural service by the ANSP concerned. one of which

was that "processes for monitoring and managing controller workloads did not ensure that newly-endorsed controllers had sufficient skills and techniques to manage the high workload situations to which they were exposed".



Flight Plan Tracking of the two aircraft involved (reproduced from the Official Report)

The full article is at:

[http://www.skybrary.aero/index.php/A320 / A346, en-route, Eastern Indian Ocean, 2012 \(LOS HF\)](http://www.skybrary.aero/index.php/A320 / A346, en-route, Eastern Indian Ocean, 2012 (LOS HF))