



Just Culture conversation between aviation and
judiciary

Castellfedels 26 May 2017

Occurrence Scenario 1

Objective of the Exercise

The objective of the exercise is to present a simulated aviation occurrence that will provide an open discussion on the issues associated with criminal investigations resulting from aviation incidents or accidents.

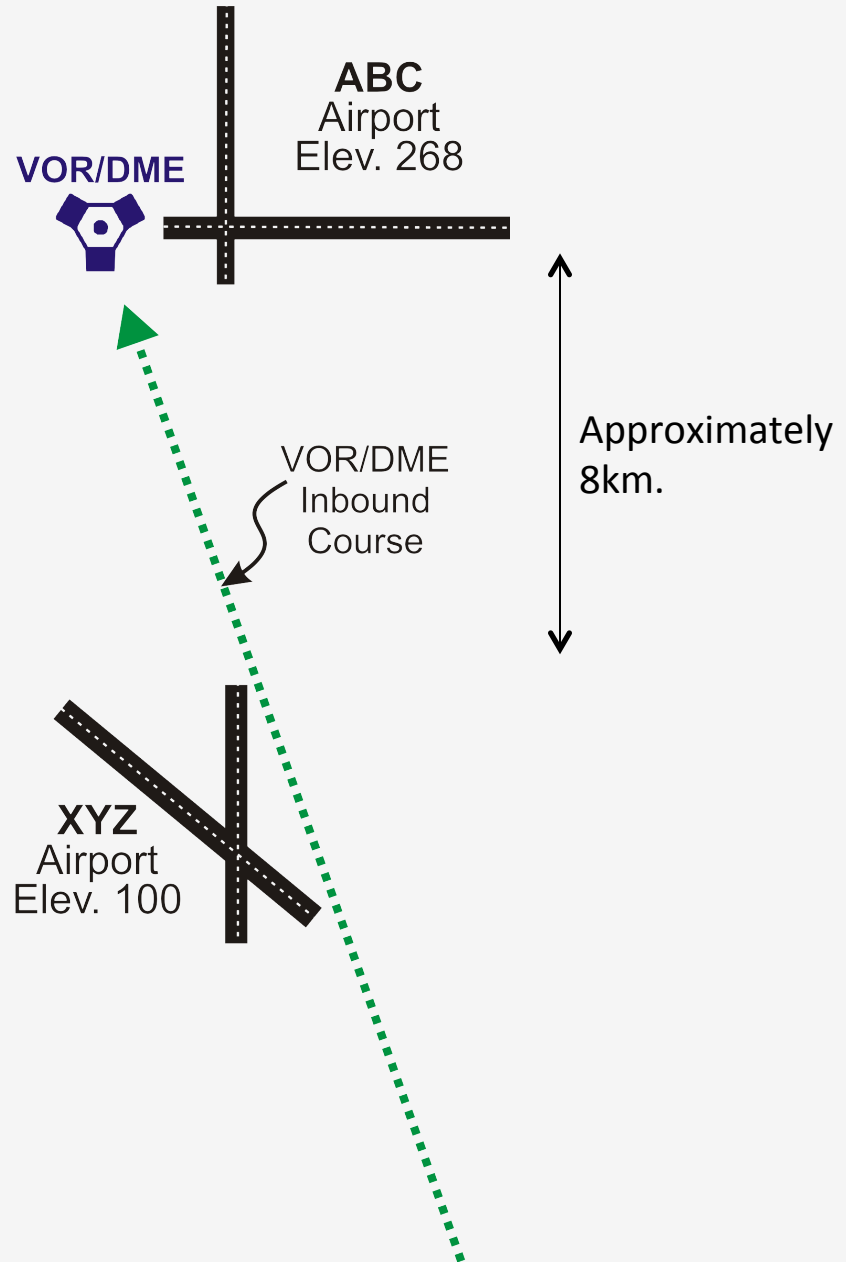
The Aircraft Involved



The Airports Involved

- ABC Airport is a regional commercial airport and the intended destination of Aircraft 1.
- XYZ Airport is a non-commercial airport approximately 8km south of ABC, only used by small airplanes.
- The airports have some similarities in their runway configurations.
- As a picture is worth a thousand words...

The Final Approach Path



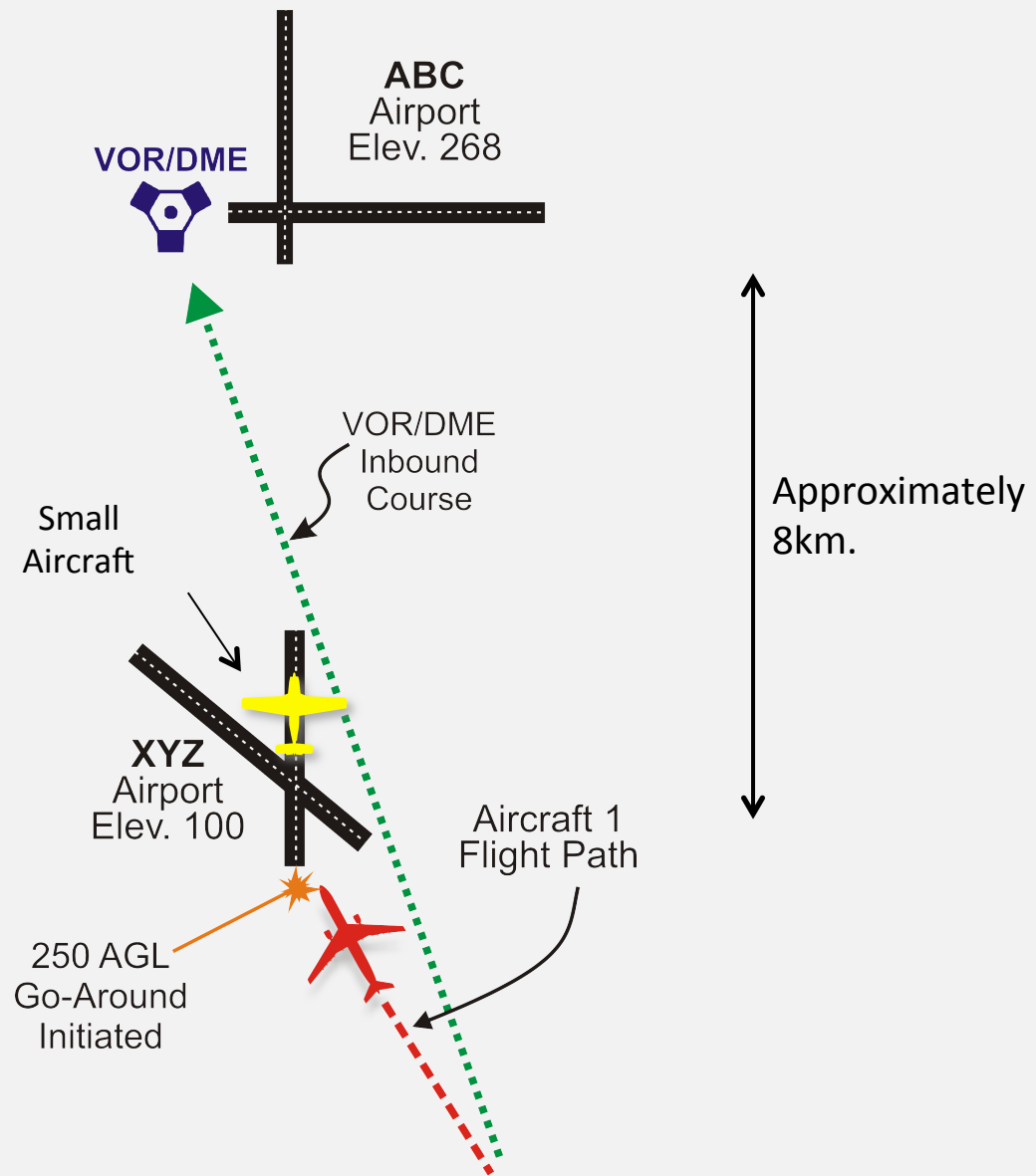
What Happened

- Aircraft 1 had been guided by the Regional Control for the approach to ABC. At the appropriate moment, the Regional Controller transferred radio communications to the Tower Controller.
- After Aircraft 1 reported 'short final', the Tower Controller gave permission to land.

What Happened

- The Regional Controller received an alert on his display as the aircraft descended too low. He called the Tower Controller to warn that Aircraft 1 was "...going for XYZ."
- The Tower Controller immediately transmitted to Aircraft 1 "...climb immediately, I say again climb immediately."
- The crew responded "We are climbing immediately."
- The climb-out began at an estimated 20-30m above the XYZ airport.

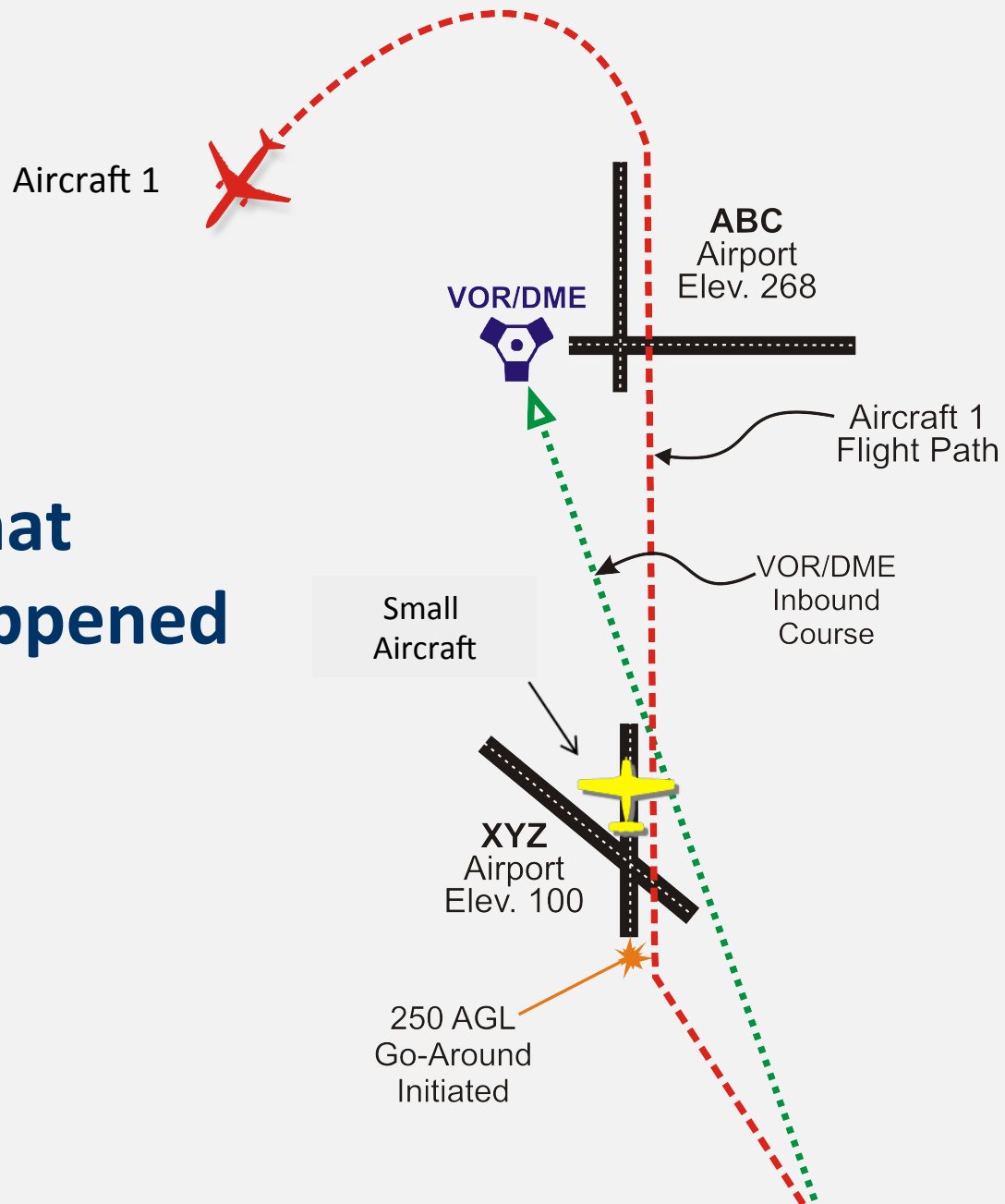
What Happened



What Happened

- The Tower Controller then said "ABC is six km further down along your route, are you able to see the lights of ABC?"
- The crew reported seeing ABC, and was given permission to re-position for the intended runway.

What Happened



What Happened

- The aircraft flew widely to the west of ABC, then turned in too early, turned back out then corrected back in to the runway maneuvering at low altitudes.
- The 'fly-through' occurred low above the airport and the aircraft was still maneuvering as it descended to land, which is not normal procedure.

2,350
AAL

Aircraft 1
Flight path
of left circle
to land

ABC
Airport
Elev. 268

250
AAL

1,350
AAL

500
AAL

XYZ
Airport
Elev. 100

**What
Happened**



Factual Items

- Aircraft 1 landed at ABC airport with no damage or injuries.
- The aircraft crew and the air traffic controllers were properly trained, current, and certificated for the operations being conducted.
- The aircraft was properly certificated and maintained for the operations being conducted.

Factual Items

- The event occurred during daytime hours, in good weather.
- The crew members and controllers indicated there were no known communication-related problems.
- The official info for ABC airport advises of the presence of XYZ airport near by. Pilots are required to have this info and it is part of the flight preparation.
- The runway at XYZ is much shorter and is unlit. There are no markings on the runway.
- A small aircraft was on the runway at XYZ at the time of the event, in radio contact with the ABC Tower Controller.

Factual Items

The controller's manual requires the controller to instruct the pilot to abort landing and make a new attempt if the airplane is considered by the controller to be dangerously positioned on final approach.

Discussion Items

- This is not an accident. There are no damages, no injuries. Thus, it may not even be reported, in spite of a legal requirement to do so.
- What would determine a pilot and/or controller to withhold such important safety information?
- Non-aviators are often surprised at how such an error can occur when the pilots can see the airport. What is the likelihood of this type of event occurring in bad weather?

What Ifs

What if the Regional Controller had not passed a warning to the Tower Controller?

What if Aircraft 1 landed at XYZ (no damage or injury) in spite of the controller's warning?

What if the controller did not warn Aircraft 1, and it landed at XYZ (no damage or injury)?

Look at the previous "What If"s again, with Aircraft 1 landing at XYZ, with damage or even injuries.