

After this conversation, and with the agreement of the other crew members, I elected to continue the service with the current First Officer.

The following day and prior to our next scheduled flight I spent some hours with the First Officer in an attempt to convince him that my actions had been taken as a safety precaution and that I viewed the situation as a medical, not operational, problem. Also this time and conversation, I had hoped, might perhaps have helped allay some of my continuing apprehension. My time was, I think, wasted and the First Officer's attitude remained somewhat sullen.

On the Flight from Bahrain the First Officer's performance was found to be far below the expected standard. He constantly missed radio and altitude calls, miss-loaded INSS etc. This performance was not because of lack of application, but rather due to mis-application. Mr. Griffin displayed an over concern for the position of all other aircraft to the point that he was tabulating all of their position reports and asked my crew members to each watch different frequencies and pass to him any position reports that they heard. Obviously with the number of aircraft, airways and frequencies in that area, the task the First Officer set himself precluded attention to his normal duties and so he had to be asked to desist.

He also seemed unaware that he was expected to acknowledge all instructions on the flight deck and had to be constantly reminded of this. It became pointless calling for actions on the flight deck when, because of lack of acknowledgement, one had to then personally confirm that the control was moved or frequency identified etc.

Similarly he seemed unaware that in his role of First Officer he should not change the position of any switching without the advice of the pilot flying. Even when hand flying you would find such things as aids or your flight director being changed without instruction or comment.

As the aircraft got deeper into Europe it became increasingly obvious that the First Officer was getting "behind the aircraft". It also seemed difficult to get any points through to him, he seemed of the opinion that being 'new to the aircraft', about a year 'new' I believe, gave ample excuse for mistakes. Some mistakes never happened, on the entire flight there was not a single sector on which wrong INS co-ordinates were found in the units, yet there was never an acceptance that wrong co-ordinates may have been inserted. Instead the INS's were obviously unserviceable because they had not accepted the correct co-ordinates.

I made a very concerted effort to bring Mr. Griffin up to an acceptable standard in his operation as a First Officer and I had thought that I had achieved this point by Bahrain southbound and offered him the subsequent sectors.

Just prior to call time on departure from Bahrain I was contacted by the Station Manager and advised that a problem existed in that a hi-jacked aircraft had passed through Bahrain and was currently on the ground in Kuwait refuelling. Knowing that all Gulf airports except Bahrain normally block their runways, in this situation it was agreed that we should attempt to turn the aircraft around in the minimum time to avoid any possibility of being caught up in the incident.

Knowing also of the possibility of airspace closure by the Middle Eastern authorities surplus fuel became a necessity. In view of this I contacted the First Officer at call time and before he had ordered fuel for the sector and explaining the situation advised him that I would require "extra" fuel up to Max Take Off Weight or 20,000 kilos.

It was only as we approached the airport that the First Officer told me that he had not ordered the fuel that I required. In view of the essentially rapid turn-around I was forced to depart with less fuel than I had required.

As explanation for his actions the First Officer said that he had not ordered the fuel that he had been instructed to because he was worried about wind shear on take off. This reason was difficult to accept on the basis "his" fuel order left the aircraft some 23,000 kilos below Max TOW and that there was no wind nor did the forecast indicate any wind on or near he ground.

The situation where the First Officer knowingly ignored a specific operational instruction and so affected the operation of an aircraft was totally unacceptable.

Over the next sector the First Officer was required to again perform his normal duties and further stress upon the importance of a standard operation in his role as a First Officer was made.

Mr. Griffin declined to accept an offer to operate the last two sectors of the flight in command under supervision.

His personal attitudes toward the crew left a lot to be desired. In Bahrain the crew was delayed in leaving the airport as he had to be "found" and then told to proceed to customs and the waiting crew transport. In Paris the crew check-in at the hotel was slowed as he held one of the receptionists attention in finding how to telephone a "girl friend", in Holland I think it was. As the hotel system is to issue all keys en masse, the entire cabin and technical crew were later prevented from receiving their keys as Mr. Griffin had gone to complete his telephone call. As was common Mr. Griffin gave a ready excuse, he had not, as crew members had noticed, made a telephone call at all, he had suddenly developed diarrhea which had forced him to the toilet.

In summary I would suggest that Mr. Griffin had improved to the point of being an operationally acceptable First Officer by the time the crew returned to Sydney though his sense of responsibility, I would think, could be matured somewhat. From the medical view point I can offer no opinion obviously, but would feel that it is not overly desirable to place the burden upon Captains of having a crew member under their command with such a medical condition as might give rise to doubt of their reliability.

A handwritten signature or set of initials, possibly 'E', consisting of a large circle with a vertical line extending downwards from its right side and a small horizontal dash at the end of that line.

MEMORANDUM

TO : Senior Line Captain B747

FROM: Capt. Ian Gillies

COPY: Chief Pilot Line Operations
Director of Medical Services
Safety Manager

DATE: 7th October 1980

REF : Your letter OHU.214/7509 of 17th Sept. 1980



The implications of your requirement for written statements from crew members covering the circumstances of an entire service rather than a specific incident during a particular flight I find to be most pointed.

In view of that circumstance, this report is provided under protest.

During a night flight from Singapore to Bahrain on the 20th July 1980 I was advised by the operating First Officer, Mr. B. A. Griffin, that he was suffering from a mental condition that led to a "compulsive urge" to close the thrust levers. He also advised that the condition was worse on long night sectors or when he was under stress and he cautioned me not to stress him.

Having no way of knowing how "compulsive" the First Officer's urge might be and in doubt as to his reactions in an emergency or high stress situation, after discussion with the other crew members, I directed the Second Officer to assume the duties normally undertaken by the First Officer.

My report to the Chief Pilot Line Operations and subsequent Incident Report refer.

Following the incident and in the presence of the Flight Engineer and Second Officer I discussed the incident with the Chief Pilot Line Operations and a Company Medical Officer who was familiar with the First Officer's medical background.

I was told that Mr. Griffin did have a continuing medical problem, that this might be evidenced by seeing him cause himself pain to distract himself from "compulsive thoughts", and that the medical opinion was that he would not actually commit an act that might endanger an aircraft.