



# **FINAL REPORT**

**Investigation of Sri Lankan Airlines flight UL128, 4R-MRE  
from VOMM to VCBI Operated  
with injured Cabin Crew Members on 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 2022**

Released by the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka

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## ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

AFT	-	After
ATPL	-	Air Transport Pilot Licence
CAASL	-	Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka
CB	-	Cumulonimbus
CCC	-	Cabin Crewmember Certificate
CCM	-	Cabin Crew Member
DGCA	-	Director General of Civil Aviation
FCC	-	Flight Control Centre
FOM	-	Flight Operations Manual
Ft.	-	feet
LT	-	Local Time
MOR	-	Mandatory Occurrence Report
PIC	-	Pilot in Command
SEP	-	Safety & Emergency Procedure
SLA	-	SriLankan Airlines
UTC	-	Coordinated Universal Time
VCBI	-	Bandaranaike International Airport, Katunayake, Sri Lanka
VOMM	-	Chennai International Airport, India



## Investigation of Sri Lankan Airlines flight UL128, 4R-MRE from VOMM to VCBI Operated with injured Cabin Crew Members on 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 2022

### 1. Synopsis

The incident of turbulence on UL 127, A320 from VCBI to VOMM was notified to CAASL via Mandatory Occurrence Report on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022 by SriLankan Airlines. Upon reviewing MOR, Cabin Voyage Report, Incident Report and Illness Report, CAASL initiated an investigation, to find out the safe operation of return flight, UL128 with injured cabin crew members.

### 2. Factual Information

Operator	:	SriLankan Airlines Ltd Airline Centre Bandaranaike International Airport Katunayake Sri Lanka
Registered Owner	:	SriLankan Airlines Ltd
Aircraft Make	:	Airbus Industries
Aircraft Model	:	A320
MSN	:	2731
Aircraft Nationality	:	Sri Lanka (4R)
Aircraft Registration	:	4R-MRE
Flight No	:	UL 128
Phase of Flight	:	Cruise
Type of Operation	:	Passenger
No of Flight Crew; Cabin Crew; Passengers	:	Flight Crew - 02; Cabin Crew - 05; Passengers - 149
Date and Time	:	16 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2022; 1505hrs (LT) /1025hrs UTC
Local time zone	:	+ 0530hrs

#### 2.1 History of the incident

SriLankan Airlines flight UL127, A320, bearing registration 4R-MRE had departed from VCBI to VOMM at 1352hrs (LT) on 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 2022. At about 1505 hrs (LT), during cruise phrase near position SAGOR at 35,000ft, the aircraft had experienced an unexpected severe turbulence (3 to 4 seconds), while flying to avoid an isolated CB. As a results, 03 crew members in the AFT galley had fallen and two were injured.

The PIC had requested the medical assistance at VOMM through data link to FCC Colombo. The flight had continued to the destination and landed safely. On arrival, the injured CCMs were taken to the medical Centre at VOMM for necessary treatments. Subsequently, after medical assessments and treatments, the same cabin crew had operated the return flight UL 128 as per scheduled duty pattern.



## 2.2 Personnel Information:

### 2.2.1 PIC

Licence	:	Valid ATPL (CAASL-72-A-10424) issued by the DGCA of Sri Lanka. Valid till 31 <sup>st</sup> Aug 2023
Medical	:	Valid till 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2023
Age and gender	:	47 years, Male
Aircraft Ratings	:	A320/321
Flying Experience (hrs)	:	Total 7391.12 hrs PIC A320 total : 697.09 hrs

### 2.2.2 Purser

Certificate	:	CCC /102 issued by the DGCA of Sri Lanka; valid till 23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 2023
Medical Validity	:	up to 02 <sup>nd</sup> Aug 2023
Age & gender	:	54 years, Male
Work experience	:	Purser: 8 years Cabin Supervisor: 15 years Cabin Crew member: 31 years

### 2.2.3 Cabin Supervisor

Certificate	:	CCC/0213 issued by the DGCA of Sri Lanka; valid till 04 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2023
Medical Validity	:	up to 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2023
Age & gender	:	45 years, Female
Work experience	:	Cabin Supervisor: 16 years Cabin Crew Member : 25 years

### 2.2.4 Flight Steward

Certificate	:	CCC/2197 issued by the DGCA of Sri Lanka; valid till 10 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2026
Medical Validity	:	up to 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2023
Age & gender	:	28 years, Female
Work experience	:	Cabin Crew Member : 6 years



### 3. Analysis

#### 3.1 Flight UL 127

After completing the meal service in economy class and while carrying out galley clearance, the aircraft had experience a severe turbulence. At this time the seat belt sign was off and was turned on by the flight crew at the same time while experiencing turbulence.

The PIC had called Purser via the intercom to check whether any passengers or crew were injured in the cabin. Thereafter, the Purser had conducted a cabin check to assess the conditions of the passengers and AFT crew. He had inquired from the crew members (assigned crew seats CS-L 2 Door primary, CCM- R2 Door primary, CCM - Swivel seat) whether they were physically fit to continue the flight. Two CCMs out three, (L2 Door Primary and Swivel seat) who were at the AFT galley had informed that they had slight pain in traumatized areas.

At the same time the PIC had inquired the condition of the AFT crew via the intercom. CS had informed the PIC that the status of the CCMs will be informed by the Purser after verifying the conditions of AFT CCMs.

Upon receiving the conditions of CCMs from the Purser, the PIC had sent a message through data link to Colombo FCC requesting medical assistance on arrival at VOMM.

Once passengers disembarked at VOMM, the medical team boarded the aircraft to examine the status of the two CCMs. The PIC had inquired on the condition of the two CCMs from the Doctor and he informed that the two injured CCMs need to take to the medical Centre for further assessment and treatment. Accordingly, 2 CCMs were taken to the medical Centre.

CCM assigned to the Swivel seat was administered pain killers and a short arm splint was applied on the left hand. The CCM assigned to L2 door primary was administered pain killers and a short arm splint was applied on the right hand.

After obtaining medical treatments, two CCMs boarded the aircraft. Purser had inquired from the CCMs about the Doctor's decision and whether the two CCMs are fit to operate the return flight. The ground staff of VOMM, had handed over the two discharge summary sheets completed & signed by the Doctor to the Purser.

During the interviews, Purser stated that he did not find any written instructions on "unfit" for flying In the Discharge summary by the Doctor. Furthermore, he stated that did not understand the medical terminology mentioned in the summery reports of both CCMs.

However, the Purser had not obtained recommendation/ verification about the conditions of both CCMs from the ground staff prior to detailing them as operating crew for the return flight.

Based on verbal confirmation from both CCMs, the Purser had informed the PIC that the two CCMs are fit to operate the return Sector flight.

The PIC in his statement stated that he had decided to operate the return flight with minimum crew of 4 CCMs after checking with the Purser. However, during the investigation it was revealed that the two



injured crew members had operated the return flight. Furthermore, the injured crew members stated that they had not been removed from the active operations in the return flight. This was confirmed by the Purser in his statement.

As per the Chapter 5 Subsection 5.2.1 of FOM and Chapter 2, Section 11.1 of SEP Manual of SriLankan Airlines, the minimum crew for this flight was 4 CCMs and the overall responsibility of a flight lies with the PIC as per Chapter 2, Subsection 2.3.2 of FOM SriLankan Airlines. It was revealed two CCMs who had undergone medical treatments were in splints. With the reduced mobility of these CCMs due to splints in situ, these two CCMs are considered as incapacitated as per the Chapter 2, Sub Section 2.11.5 of SEP Manual of SriLankan Airlines.

The Purser had advised both CCMs to be remained at galley area to assist the meal services on the return sector. The CCM who assigned as a (L2) Door Primary had continued as door primary on arming and disarming duties on return flight.

### 3.2 SLA Medical Centre

Once returning from the flight, the said CCMs had gone to the Medical Centre, SLA for further assessment. The two CCMs were seen by a panel Doctor, advised to get orthopedic opinion if necessary.

It was revealed that no proper clinical examination was carried out prior to releasing them with medical leave according to relevant CCM's medical file documentation. No referral was done to the Company Medical officer who is authorized to perform Class II Cabin Crew medicals by CAASL.

## 4. Conclusion

### 4.1 Findings

- a) Neither PIC nor Purser had obtained a clarification about the medical conditions of injured CCM from the discharge document issued by the Doctor at VOMM.
- b) There was no medical prescription or further referral was given by the doctor who examined the CCMS at SLA medical Centre to confirm the diagnosis of these 2 CCMs prior to granting medical leave. Only verbal advice was given to CCMs to obtain orthopedic opinion.
- c) The Sri Lankan Airlines panel Doctor who had seen the two injured CCMs had not referred or informed the Company Medical Officer regarding this incident and had not taken advice on their further management plan.
- d) Lack of responsibility on the part of the PIC to ensure that the injured crew was "fit to fly" on return flight after obtaining treatments for the injuries due to turbulent weather.
- e) PIC had not discharged his duties by giving proper guidance to the Purser, on minimum crew operations, which is a noncompliance to the Chapter 2, subsection 2.3.2, (C) iii of FOM of Sri Lankan Airlines.
- f) There were no documentary evidence found on minimum crew operation of this return flight.





## 5. Recommendations

- a) The Airline shall have a procedure to obtain confirmation “fit to fly” from the attending Medical Officer when crew members are injured/incapacitated in ex other stations prior to departure.
- b) The Medical Centre of Sri Lankan Airlines shall develop a procedure on medical management plan when Crew Members are seen by the Panel Medical Officers.
- c) The Medical Centre of Sri Lankan Airlines shall develop examination procedures for panel Medical Officers of any person obtaining medical treatment at Sri Lankan Airline Medical Centre.
- d) The Airline to ensure PIC shall strictly adhere to the requirements given in Chapter 2, subsection 2.3.2(C) iii of the FOM by giving proper guidance to the Purser, on minimum crew operations as stipulated in Chapter 2, Section 2.11.5.2 of SEP Manual.

.....END.....