

Considering the use of pitot head probe covers and their removal

ATSB Preliminary Report and Safety Advisory Notice issued

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau's safety advisory notice released on 30 August advises operators flying to Brisbane Airport to consider the use of pitot probe covers and, when used, ensure rigorous processes are in place to confirm the covers are removed before flight.

Summary

The release of this advisory notice follows the publication of the ATSB's preliminary report into an airspeed indication failure on take-off of an Airbus A330 at Brisbane airport on 18 July 2018.

The ATSB found that local engineering support crew placed covers on the pitot probes soon after the previous landing. Inspections during the aircraft's turnaround did not identify their fitment and they remained on the aircraft for its departure. This resulted in unusable airspeed information being displayed to the flight crew. The flight crew continued the take-off and carried out several checklists before returning to Brisbane Airport.

Several high-capacity aircraft have departed from Brisbane with one of the pitot probes blocked by insect nests in recent years, including two that resulted in rejected take-offs investigated by the ATSB. Brisbane Airport Corporation and the CASA* advise using pitot probe covers there.

It is understood that the ATSB investigation is continuing.

Issue of documents

The ATSB Preliminary report: *Airspeed indication failure on take-off involving Airbus A330, 9M-MTK, Brisbane Airport, Queensland, on 18 July 2018* is available here: www.atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/2018/aair/ao-2018-053/

The Safety Advisory Notice *Managing the use of pitot probe covers at Brisbane Airport* issued by ATSB is available here: <http://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/safety-advisory-notice/ao-2018-053-san-003/>

*Australia's Civil Aviation Safety Authority (www.casa.gov.au)

Picture caption

*Pitot probe covers removed from the aircraft after the incident flight reported.
Photo: ATSB ©.*