



SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

ORDER PAPER

Thursday 17th April 2008

1. Prayers
2. Approval of the Votes and Proceedings
3. Oaths
4. Announcements (if any)
5. Petitions

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTION

1. **Plane Crashes in Nigeria. Missing Beech 1900 5N - JAH Aircraft Belonging to Wings Aviation Ltd:**

Senator Anyim Ude
Senator Nicholas Y. Ugbane
Senator Mujitaba Mallam
Senator Umaru Dahiru

Senator Bala Mohammed
Senator Ikechukwu Obiorah
Senator Gyang Dantong

The Senate,

Recalls that on October 22, 2005 a Bellview Aircraft crashed near Lagos killing all the 117 passengers on board; on December 10, 2005 a Sosoliso Aircraft carrying 107 passengers crashed in Port Harcourt with only 2 survivors; on September 17, 2006 a Dornier 228 Airforce plane crashed near Obudu killing all the 13 Army Generals on board; on October 29, 2006 an ADC aircraft with 96 people crashed near Abuja. There were 9 survivors.

Notes that on Saturday, March 15, 2008 at 0736 hrs, a Beech 1900 5N-JAH Aircraft departed Lagos for **BEBI AIRSTRIP** near Obudu Cattle Ranch owned by Cross River State Government; Capt. A.K. Egbedi was in command with Co-pilot Ahmed Tango and a female Marketing Executive, Subarata Alex Jacks;

Notes that at 0848 hrs, the Aircraft contacted Enugu Air Traffic Control (ATC) maintaining Flight Level 250 (25,000 ft). ATC cleared the aircraft to descend to FL 110 (11,000 ft.);

Notes that at 0905 hrs, Enugu ATC cleared the aircraft to descend to FL050 (5000ft.) and instructed the pilot to contact Bebi Airstrip. The flight was proceeding normally and in accordance with its flight plan. However, this was the last radio communication with the aircraft;

Notes that at 0923 hrs, the aircraft failed to arrive at Bebi Airstrip and the radio operator there raised alarm while normal communications checks to contact the aircraft were initiated. Immediately, the first phase of Search And Rescue (SAR) action began;

Notes that at 1120 hrs, Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) contacted National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) with details of the overdue aircraft;

Notes that at 1256 hrs, NEMA Helicopters were assembled for SAR action;
Notes that at 1310 hrs, distress phase was declared. That although SAR action commenced before the declaration of the distress phase, it was at this time and based on a range of factors, including aircraft endurance that the aircraft was officially declared missing;

Notes that at 1320 hrs, rescue Helicopter departed Calabar to join the search while NEMA Helicopter departed Abuja at 1336 hrs to transit to the search area;

Notes that on Saturday, March 15, 2008, DG, NEMA issued a press release in Abuja concerning the missing aircraft;

Notes that at 1850 hrs, Helicopters suspended their search for the day due to darkness and reduced visibility;

Sunday, March 16th, 2008:

Notes that on Sunday morning, March 16, 2008, Helicopters resumed the search effort at first light;

Notes that on Sunday, March 16, 2008 at 1637 hrs, villagers from Igabu, Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State claimed to have seen the wreckage of the missing aircraft alleging that 3 souls on board were dead;

Notes that on Sunday evening, March 16, 2008, based on information from the Igabu villagers to Government officials, Aviation Executives in Lagos and Abuja announced that the wreckage of the missing aircraft had been found with the 3 souls on board dead; Nobody reported/confirmed citing the wreckage of the aircraft;

Notes that as it was then believed that the aircraft had crashed, the Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB) became involved. The Commissioner of the AIB wrote to the Director General, Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) and requested documents concerning the aircraft and the crew;

Monday, 17th March, 2008:

Notes that the relevant documents were collated and collected by officers from the AIB on Monday, 17th March, 2008;

Notes that on Monday, 17th March, 2008 at 0145 hrs, search teams reached the reported crash site where nothing was found;

Notes that early on Monday, 17th March, 2008, a rejoinder was issued correcting the earlier information that the aircraft wreckage had been found;

Notes that since Monday, 17th March, 2008, air and ground search has continued and must continue as is done in other countries in similar circumstances;

Emergency Locator Transmitter

The Senate further notes that:

As required by NCAA regulations, the missing Wings Aviation aircraft was equipped with an Emergency Locator Transmitter (EL T). The EL T is intended to transmit a signal that can indicate its location to special orbiting satellites. The EL T fitted to the aircraft is said to be a new type that meets the current international standard, Technical Standard Order (TSO) C406 with battery due for replacement in December, 2010.

These beacons are designed to be activated automatically by crash forces. To date, no signal has been heard from the beacon fitted to the missing aircraft.

EL Ts such as this transmits a unique code that tells searchers which aircraft or vessel it belongs to. The code is registered with national authorities and especially useful when a beacon is inadvertently activated since the owners can be contacted and an unnecessary and expensive search can be avoided.

To be effective, an EL T must itself survive the crash forces and it is common in the type of catastrophic accident that seems possible in the case of the missing Wings Aviation Beech 1900, for EL Ts to themselves be damaged or destroyed.

In summary, the Senate notes that:

The missing Wings Aviation Aircraft was fitted with an EL T that meets NCAA and international standards;

The beacon was registered with the appropriate authority in the USA;

The beacon had been maintained correctly;

The batteries in the beacon were not due for replacement until 2010.

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) **Sympathise** with the families and friends of the crew members on board of the aircraft who have been kept in suspense and expectations of news about their loved ones;
- (ii) **Urge** the Federal Government to set up a panel to investigate the circumstances surrounding the missing plane and the possibility that the plane was flown outside Nigeria and make appropriate recommendations;
- (iii) **Urge** the Federal Government to invite international assistance to unravel the mystery and locate the missing aircraft in view of the mountainous terrain and topography of Obudu axis and the necessity to deploy satellite imagery in the search;
- (iv) **Urge** the Federal Government to transfer the issuing of licenses for the development of aerodromes, airstrips and helipads to the NCAA and to equip and direct the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) to take over the provision of Air Traffic Services in all the aerodromes, airstrips and helipads in Nigeria; For now they are handled/managed by the Federal Ministry of Transportation, State Governments, Private Companies and individuals;
- (v) **Urge** the Federal Government to restructure, re-equip, retrain and transfer the Aeronautical Search and Rescue operational arm of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to the Nigerian Airforce from where specially trained staff and equipment should be deployed to handle Search And Rescue operations when they occur. The other anTIS of NEMA could continue to handle other relief operations such as flood, fire and ecological disasters;
- (vi) **Mandate** its Committee on Aviation to conduct a Public Hearing on the application and utilisation of the xl9.5 billion Intervention Fund released in 2006 by the Federal Government for the rehabilitation and equipment of the Aviation Industry to meet the kind of challenges posed by the missing aircraft.

CONSIDERATION OF A REPORT

1. Report of the Committee on Petroleum Upstream:

Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Bill, 2008 (SB. 81)

Senator Lee L. Maeba

"That the Senate do resume the consideration of the Report of the Committee on Petroleum Upstream, on the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Bill, 2008 (SB. 81)" (*Adjourned Debate - Tuesday, 15th April, 2008*).

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

	Committee	Date	Time	Venue
1.	Rule and Business	Thursday, 17th April, 2008	3. 00 p.m	Committee Room 15 Assembly Complex
2	Public Accounts	Tuesday, 22nd April, 2008	2.00 p.m	Hearing Room 4 Assembly Complex
4.	Capital Market	Thursday, 17th April, 2008	2.00 p.m	Committee Room 117 Senate New Building Assembly Complex

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5.	Niger-Delta	Thursday, 17th April, 2008	2.00 p.m	Committee Room 3.12 Senate New Building Assembly Complex
6.	Finance	Thursday, 17th April, 2008	12.00 noon	Committee Room 323 Senate New Building Assembly Complex
	Adhoc Committee (Bakassi)	Thursday, 17th April, 2008	12.00 noon	Committee Room 313 Senate New Building Assembly Complex
	Environment and Ecology	Tuesday, 22nd April, 2008	2.00 p.m	Committee Room 117 Senate New Building Assembly Complex
9.	Works	Tuesday, 23rd April, 2008	1.00 p.m	Committee Room 313 Senate New Building Assembly Complex