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## Landing without clearance, Boeing 767-300ER-33A, G-OITG, November 19, 1996

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**Micro-summary:** This Boeing 767 landed without a clearance, occupying the same runway as a 747 that had previously landed.

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**Event Date:** 1996-11-19 at 1924 CST


**Investigative Body:** National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), USA


**Investigative Body's Web Site:** <http://www.nts.gov/>

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		NTSB ID: CHI97IA033		Aircraft Registration Number: GOITG	
		Occurrence Date: 11/19/1996		Most Critical Injury: None	
		Occurrence Type: Incident		Investigated By: NTSB	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place CHICAGO		State IL	Zip Code 60666	Local Time 1924	Time Zone CST
Airport Proximity: On Airport		Distance From Landing Facility: 1		Direction From Airport: 270	
Aircraft Information Summary					
Aircraft Manufacturer Boeing		Model/Series 767-300ER-33A		Type of Aircraft Airplane	
Sightseeing Flight: No			Air Medical Transport Flight: No		
Narrative					
Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:					
<p>HISTORY OF FLIGHT</p> <p>On November 19, 1996, at 1924 central standard time (cst), a Boeing 767-300ER-33A, GOITG, operated as Alitalia flight 638, landed on runway 09R at O'Hare International Airport, Chicago, Illinois, without landing clearance from O'Hare Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT). The airplane touched down approximately 7,000 feet behind a Boeing 747, operated as Japan Air Lines (JAL) flight 038, which was on landing rollout. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the incident. The flight was being conducted as regular scheduled foreign international air carrier service under 14 CFR Part 129. An IFR flight plan was on file. There were no reported injuries to the 11 crew and 129 passengers who deplaned normally at the gate. The flight originated at Rome, Italy, at 0900 cst.</p> <p>The captain, a British national, stated that he was flying the approach into O'Hare International Airport, and that radio communications were being handled by the first officer, an Italian national. The captain said that a supervisory first officer was also on board and was monitoring communications. While on downwind leg for the localizer approach to runway 09R, the captain received a frequency change to Chicago Approach Control. The crew was advised that their landing runway would be 09R and that speed control was in effect. The captain said that the frequency was extremely busy. The captain received instructions to turn onto base leg and then was advised to intercept the localizer. The instruction was late, causing the airplane to overshoot the localizer course and to intercept the course from the other side. The first officer reported to Chicago Approach Control that they were established on the localizer. The captain said that at that time, he believed that they were on tower frequency. The captain said, at no time during the approach did they receive another frequency change. The first officer informed the captain that pre-landing checks were completed and stated, "landing clearance yet to come."</p> <p>The local controller at O'Hare ATCT controlling arrivals on runway 09R made a radio transmission to Alitalia flight 638 at 1920:34 est, "Alitalia 638 heavy are you with me, sir?" The local controller repeated the transmission at 1920:46 est. At 1920:54, the local controller made the radio transmission, "Alitalia 638 heavy, are you with me, sir, execute a missed approach."</p> <p>On short final for the approach, the captain told the first officer to make a call advising what he thought was O'Hare ATCT that they were on short final. At 1920:55, the first officer transmitted over Chicago approach control frequency, "Alitalia 638, short final." The east arrival controller at Chicago Terminal Radar Air Traffic Control (TRACON) transmitted, "short final, go over to tower one two one seven five." The east arrival controller transmitted the frequency change two more times.</p> <p>The captain said that the first officer was "unable to break in as the periods between transmissions was practically nil." The captain made two attempts to advise the controlling agency</p>					
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## Narrative (Continued)

that they were on short final for the approach. In both attempts, he did not receive replies.

The captain checked the runway and noted a Boeing 747 crossing the landing runway towards the far end. The captain said, "I was sure that it (the B-747) would be clear of the runway before I touched down, which in fact it was. I also checked the intersecting runways and saw no conflicting traffic." The captain elected to treat the situation as a communications failure and landed the airplane without landing clearance.

The local controller at O'Hare ATCT made a radio transmission to Alitalia flight 638 at 19:21:41, "Alitalia 638 heavy, are you with me yet, sir?" This transmission was repeated by the local controller at 19:22:25.

After landing, the captain instructed the first officer to contact O'Hare ground control. O'Hare ground control advised the crew to "taxi to the gate." The first officer responded, "Taxi to the gate, Alitalia 635." The captain was then able to check the frequency selected against the approach plate. He found that the tower frequency was not selected. O'Hare ground control then inquired, "Alitalia 638 heavy, did you ever talk to the tower on 121.75?" The captain responded, "Negative."

## PERSONNEL INFORMATION

The captain and supervisory first officer were British nationals employed by Monarch Airlines, Limited, Luton Beds, United Kingdom. They were on loan to Alitalia Airlines for the purpose of operating airplanes on Alitalia's international routes. They were additionally tasked with training Alitalia pilots on the Boeing 767-300ER equipment and on procedures for operating on international routes into the United States.

The captain had 580 hours in the Boeing 767 airplane, and 219 hours within the 90 days prior to the incident. The captain had successfully passed a company proficiency flight check on September 25, 1996.

The first officer was an Italian national employed by Alitalia Airlines. According to the captain, the first officer was being trained. The first officer "was new to the American environment. This was his first flight to Chicago." The captain also said that English was not the first officer's first language, but it was satisfactory. The first officer had successfully passed a company proficiency flight check on September 11, 1996.

## AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

The Boeing 767-300ER-33A airplane was owned by Ansett Worldwide Airlines, Melbourne, Australia. It was on "wet lease" to Monarch Airlines, Limited, Luton Beds, United Kingdom, which managed and operated the airplane for Alitalia Airlines, Rome, Italy, under the rules of the British Civil Aviation Authority.

The airplane was being maintained by Monarch Airlines Engineering, Limited, Luton, United Kingdom. The airplane had undergone a "Type A-6" continuous maintenance inspection at Rome, Italy, on November 19, 1996, prior to the incident flight.

## TESTS AND RESEARCH

A review of the operations, procedures and equipment of the Air Traffic Control Tower at O'Hare International Airport, Chicago, Illinois, was conducted on December 3, 1996, at 1000 est. It was found that O'Hare ATCT controllers can establish a direct communication link with the arrival controller at the Terminal Radar Air Traffic Control (TRACON) Facility at Elgin, Illinois through a communications system known as Remote Digital Voice Switches (RDVS). This system allows the ATCT

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## Narrative (Continued)

local controller by depressing and holding a button on the RDVS panel, to communicate directly with the TRACON arrival controller through both controller's headsets. The ATCT local controller on duty at the time of the incident did not exercise this option in attempting to communicate with Alitalia flight 638. The Air Traffic Control Tower is also equipped with several laser-sight light guns, which are used to send visual signals to airplanes on the ground or in flight. The ATCT local controller on duty at the time of the incident did not attempt to use one of the light guns to send a visual signal to Alitalia flight 638.

A review of the operations, procedures and equipment of the Terminal Radar Air Traffic Control facility, Elgin, Illinois, was conducted on December 10, 1996, at 0900 est. It was found that controller's procedures for issuing instructions and clearances to foreign air carriers differed from their procedures used to issue instructions and clearances to U. S. air carriers. Local controllers would give multiple instructions and clearances to U. S. air carrier pilots in order to minimize the number of radio calls to the airplanes; hence, managing the large volume of airplanes coming into the class "B" airspace around O'Hare International Airport. With the foreign air carriers, local controllers, considering possible comprehension delays due to language differences, would issue single-event instructions. This required area controllers to make more radio calls to each foreign air carrier airplane.

FAA Order 7110.65, "Air Traffic Control," paragraph 2-1-15, "Control Transfer," stated:

a. Transfer control of an aircraft in accordance with the following conditions:

1. At a prescribed or coordinated location, time, fix or altitude; or,

2. At the time a radar handoff and frequency change to the receiving controller have been completed, when authorized by facility directives or Letter of Agreement which specifies the type and extent of control that is transferred.


A facility directive entitled ORD 7110.65A, paragraph 4-2, "General Arrival Procedures," stated:


a. Unless coordinated, arrival aircraft shall be transferred to the appropriate Local Control frequency no later than the Outer Marker of the ILS final approach course or the Final Approach Fix (FAF) on a non-precision approach.

The east arrival controller on duty at the time of the incident did not issue the instruction to Alitalia flight 638 to switch over from his radio frequency to O'Hare ATCT's radio frequency.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parties to the investigation were the Federal Aviation Administration Flight Standards District Office, Schiller Park, Illinois, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Naperville, Illinois, and Alitalia Airlines, Rome, Italy.

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		Occurrence Type: Incident			
Landing Facility/Approach Information					
Airport Name	Airport ID:	Airport Elevation	Runway Used	Runway Length	Runway Width
O'HARE INTL	ORD	667 Ft. MSL	9R	10141	150
Runway Surface Type: Asphalt					
Runway Surface Condition: Dry					
Type Instrument Approach: ILS-localizer Only					
VFR Approach/Landing: None					
Aircraft Information					
Aircraft Manufacturer		Model/Series		Serial Number	
Boeing		767-300ER-33A		27918	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Normal					
Landing Gear Type: Retractable - Tricycle					
Homebuilt Aircraft? No	Number of Seats: 211	Certified Max Gross Wt.	300000 LBS	Number of Engines: 2	
Engine Type:	Engine Manufacturer:	Model/Series:	Rated Power:		
Turbo Fan	GE	CF6-80C2-B6F	62000 LBS		
- Aircraft Inspection Information					
Type of Last Inspection	Date of Last Inspection	Time Since Last Inspection	Airframe Total Time		
Continuous Airworthiness	11/1996	9 Hours	3526 Hours		
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information					
ELT Installed? Yes	ELT Operated? No	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site?			
Owner/Operator Information					
Registered Aircraft Owner ANSETT WORLDWIDE AIRLINES		Street Address TULLAMARINE AIRPORT			
		City MELBOURNE	State AU	Zip Code	
Operator of Aircraft MONARCH AIRLINES LIMITED		Street Address LONDON LUTON AIRPORT			
		City LUTON	State UK	Zip Code	
Operator Does Business As: ALITALIA AIRLINES			Operator Designator Code:		
- Type of U.S. Certificate(s) Held: None					
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s):					
Operating Certificate:			Operator Certificate:		
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 129: Foreign					
Type of Flight Operation Conducted: Scheduled; International; Passenger Only					
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**First Pilot Information**

Name On File	City On File	State On File	Date of Birth On File	Age 55
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Sex: M	Seat Occupied: Left	Principal Profession: Civilian Pilot	Certificate Number: On File
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Certificate(s): Airline Transport; Foreign

Airplane Rating(s): Multi-engine Land

Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA: None

Instrument Rating(s): Airplane

Instructor Rating(s): None

Type Rating/Endorsement for Accident/Incident Aircraft? Yes	Current Biennial Flight Review?
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Medical Cert.: Class 1	Medical Cert. Status: Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Date of Last Medical Exam: 09/1996
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- Flight Time Matrix	All A/C	This Make and Model	Airplane Single Engine	Airplane Multi-Engine	Night	Instrument		Rotorcraft	Glider	Lighter Than Air
						Actual	Simulated			
Total Time		580								
Pilot In Command(PIC)										
Instructor										
Last 90 Days	219	219		219						
Last 30 Days										
Last 24 Hours	10	10		10						

Seatbelt Used? Yes	Shoulder Harness Used? Yes	Toxicology Performed? No	Second Pilot? Yes
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**Flight Plan/Itinerary**

Type of Flight Plan Filed: IFR

Departure Point ROME	State IT	Airport Identifier IRF	Departure Time 0900	Time Zone CST
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Destination Same as Accident/Incident Location	State	Airport Identifier ORD	
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Type of Clearance: IFR

Type of Airspace: Class B

**Weather Information**

Source of Briefing: Company

Method of Briefing:

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**Weather Information**

WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
ORD	1856	CST	667 Ft. MSL	1 NM	270 Deg. Mag.

Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Unknown 0 Ft. AGL Condition of Light: Night/Bright

Lowest Ceiling: Overcast 9000 Ft. AGL Visibility: 10 SM Altimeter: 30.00 "Hg

Temperature: -18 °C Dew Point: -18 °C Wind Direction: Density Altitude: 750 Ft.

Wind Speed: 7 Gusts: Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Conditions

Visibility (RVR): 0 Ft. Visibility (RVV) 0 SM Intensity of Precipitation: Unknown

Restrictions to Visibility: None


Type of Precipitation: None

**Accident Information**

Aircraft Damage: None Aircraft Fire: None Aircraft Explosion: None

Classification: Foreign Registered/U.S. Soil

- Injury Summary Matrix	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	TOTAL
First Pilot				1	1
Second Pilot				1	1
Student Pilot					
Flight Instructor					
Check Pilot					
Flight Engineer					
Cabin Attendants				9	9
Other Crew					
Passengers				129	129
- TOTAL ABOARD -				140	140
Other Ground	0	0	0		0
- GRAND TOTAL -	0	0	0	140	140

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Administrative Information

Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)  
DAVID C. BOWLING

Additional Persons Participating in This Accident/Incident Investigation:

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