

## REPORT

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SL REP: 17/2005

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This investigation is limited in its extent. For this reason, the AIB-N has chosen to use a simplified report format. The report format indicated in the ICAO annex 13 is only used when the scope of the investigation makes it necessary.

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All times given in this report is local time (UTC + 2 hours), if not otherwise stated.

### Aircraft

-type & reg.: Antonov-24, RA 46651/Fokker-50, LN-RND

-engines: 2 Ivchenko (progress) Ai-24A turboprops/  
2 Pratt & Whitney Canada PW125B turboprops

Operator: ARKHANGELS AIRLINES/SAS COMMUTER

Radio call sign: AFL799/SAS2351

Date and time: July 19, 2002, at approx 1115 hours

Location: 40 NM east Tromsø, Norway

Type of occurrence: Air traffic incident, violation of separation minimum

Type of flight: Scheduled commercial, both flights

Weather cond.: VMC

Light cond.: Daylight

Flight cond.: Above clouds

Flight plans: IFR

No. of persons onb. : Unknown

Injuries: None

Aircraft damage: None

Other damage: None

Commanders: No information received

Information sources: SAS COMMUTER Commander: "Air Traffic Incident Report", Tromsø TWR/APP: Incident report to AAIB and AAIBs own investigation.

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### SUMMARY

Arkhangelsk799, an Antonov-24, from Murmansk (ULMM) was en route in Bodø control area, sector east, to Tromsø airport Langnes (ENTC). The flight was in radio contact with Tromsø APP/TWR some 40 NM east of the airport, and the crew had received inbound routing to NDB KV maintaining flight level (FL) 180.

SAS2351, a Fokker 50, was proceeding en route from Lakselv (ENNA) to Tromsø at FL 160, having received clearance to descend from FL 160 to FL 100. The Fokker 50 was some 4 NM behind the Antonov-24, but with a higher indicated airspeed, when the air traffic controller at Tromsø APP/TWR informed the crew that they were number one for approach. The crew informed ATC that they had an Antonov-24 aircraft in sight, some 2 000 ft above. The Arkhangelsk799 was also informed, at the same time, of being number two for landing behind the overtaking traffic below. At the time the F-50 started descend from FL 160 to FL 100, Arkhangelsk799 was given clearance to leave FL 180 for FL 160. Shortly thereafter the air traffic controller of Tromsø APP/TWR observed on his radarscope that the Arkhangelsk flight was descending through FL 156. He immediately requested info of present FL. In response, the crew of the An-24 answered "FL 170 for FL 160". When observed on radar that the An-24 was passing FL 150 still descending, another check was made, to which was replied: "descending to FL 160".

Tromsø APP/TWR contacted the Fokker 50, and the crew confirmed they had the Antonov-24 aircraft in sight, closing in on their present FL. The Commander of the F-50 stated that the other aircraft was giving incorrect information regarding the actual FL. The Arkhangelsk flight was repeatedly requested by Tromsø APP/TWR to stop his descent. After some confusion in the radio communication, it was finally confirmed: the Arkhangelsk flight was maintaining FL 130. The remaining of the aircraft descents and approaches were uneventful.

The commander of the Fokker 50 states in his report that the closest horizontal distance between the two aircraft was approx. 0,5 NM, and the closest vertical distance was 300 - 400 ft.

Both crews were informed by ATC after landing that the incident would be reported, and both parties should file an "Air traffic incident report". In spite of attempts, both from ATC Tromsø and AIB-Norway, no oral or written report has been received from Arkhangelsk Airlines.

To this draft report, the following comments has been received:

The Commander of SAS2351 states among other factors:

"With regard to my memory the report is correct up until the statement where Antonov-24 is maintaining FL 130. When he left FL 180 I recall telling my co-pilot "check out that rapid descend!" And in that phase of flight we knew he was cleared only to FL 160. But he certainly continued his descend and as stated he was 300 ft above us when we were at FL 130. However this is where I recall him pulling the aircraft up into a steep climb straight up to FL 160, never admitting to ATC/TWR being below FL 160"

The Norwegian Pilots Association states among other factors (translated):

“Elements that may have been consciously omitted are the problems around meter and feet altimeters. As we know, most Russian aircraft are equipped with altimeters using meter as standard. This mixture has over time caused several accidents and incident, and a high degree of attention and good cockpit discipline is needed to avoid these problems. In addition the correct use and phraseology of the English language is of great importance to avoid misunderstandings”

The general manager of Archangelsk Airlines states among other factors:

“On the bases of decoding of the flight information devices and the captain’s report it was found that the main reason of the incident was a short failure of the foot-graduated altimeter. During the incident there was no “resolution advisory” signal from the TCAS system.”

The Norwegian Traffic Controllers Association comments among other factors (translated):

“We consider the following factors:

1. Wrong input on the altimeter. (The QNH was set too early)
2. The altimeter is based on meter, and the given limitation was wrongly converted from meter to feet.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE ACCIDENT BOARD**

All aircraft in controlled air space should adhere to the clearances given. When ATC asks a crew for correct flight level, incorrect reporting cannot be accepted. The VMC conditions in the area of this incident may have prevented this violation of the given clearance from becoming a dangerous traffic conflict.