

Air France and Airbus cleared of involuntary manslaughter over 2009 Atlantic crash

Air France and Airbus have been found not guilty of involuntary manslaughter over the crash of Flight 447 in 2009 that killed 228 people.

The Airbus A330 was travelling from the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro to [Paris](#) when it crashed into the Atlantic Ocean during a thunderstorm in June 2009, killing people from 33 countries.

Both Air France and Airbus denied involuntary manslaughter.

A French court delivered the ruling today following a two-month trial, concluding that there wasn't sufficient evidence of a direct link between the companies' decisions and the crash.

Air France has compensated the families of those killed.

France's first ever corporate manslaughter ended in disappointment for the victims' families.

Claire Durousseau, who lost her niece in the crash, said: "Our lost ones have died a second time. I feel sick."

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President of the AF447 victim's association, Daniele Lamy said: "The loser first and foremost is French justice."

Air France expressed "deepest compassion" to the relatives, while Airbus's lawyer declined to comment after the decision.

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Image:

Part of the A330 aircraft are removed from the Atlantic Ocean in 2009

The official report on the disaster was started after black box recorders were found following a two-year search.

It found that the aircraft crashed due to several factors, including icing over external sensors called pitot tubes and pilot error.

All the crew died in the disaster.

Air France was accused of not having implemented training in case the pitot tubes iced over, while Airbus was accused of not sufficiently informing airlines and crews about pitot faults and not providing sufficient training to mitigate the risk.

An Associated Press investigation found Airbus had known about problems with the types of pitots used on the jet that crashed since at least 2002, but had failed to replace them until after the tragedy.

The model in question – a Thales AA pitot – was subsequently

banned and replaced. Meanwhile, Air France changed its training manuals and simulations.

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How did Flight 447 crash?

As a storm buffeted the plane, ice disabled the tubes, stopping speed and altitude information and leading to the autopilot disconnecting.

The crew resumed manual piloting, but with erroneous navigation data.

The aircraft then went into an aerodynamic stall, its nose pitched upward and it plunged into the sea.