



Air India Flight AI-171

Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, 12 June 2025

On 12 June 2025, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner aircraft, registration VT-ANB, operated by Air India performing flight AI-171 from Ahmedabad (India) to London Gatwick (UK) failed to gain height following takeoff, impacting into the “BJ Medical College” in Meghaninagar suburb about 0.9nm past the runway end. The pilot had declared a Mayday, stating that the aircraft had “no thrust” and was “not taking lift” prior to the accident. There were 230 passengers and 12 crew members onboard. There have been 241 reported fatalities and one injury onboard and another 39 fatalities in addition to many injuries confirmed on the ground.

Since 2006, our specialist Aviation team has acted for over 1200 bereaved families and injured survivors of over 110 aviation accidents across the world. Over the last 15 of those years, our Aviation team has recovered more than **USD \$500 million** for injured passengers and bereaved families of aviation accidents worldwide, including more than **USD \$140 million** following [Asian air accidents](#), more than any other Aviation team in the UK or Europe. This confidential briefing is provided solely for the benefit of families who have lost loved ones in this accident, to provide clarity about what we know, what may have happened, further areas of investigation, and your legal rights.

If you would like further information or would like to discuss how we can help your family, please contact Sarah Stewart at [sstewart@stewartslaw.com](mailto:ss Stewart@stewartslaw.com) or Peter Neenan at pneenan@stewartslaw.com.

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A. Investigations

Following the accident, an official investigation has been commenced by India's Air Accident Investigation Bureau in accordance with international aviation laws dating back to 1944. Assisting in the investigation is the UK Air Accident Investigation Branch and the US National Transportation Safety Board.

These investigations routinely take 2 years but can take more, depending on the complexity. The starting point for the investigation will be to download and analyse the Digital Flight Data Recorder (DFDR) and the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) onboard the aircraft. These are collectively called the black boxes and both have been recovered by the investigation team. The Boeing 787 records more data than any other Boeing aircraft so the DFDR in particular will provide vital clues as to the cause of the accident.

It is common for companies and individuals to talk about commencing an "independent investigation". Families should note that under international law, these "independent investigations" do not have any access to the wreckage, black boxes or any pertinent crash data so there is a limit to what they can actually investigate.

As information is released from the official investigation, we will work with our network of pilots and experts to interpret it and update our clients accordingly.

B. What we know

The information that is currently in the public domain indicates it is highly likely that the aircraft suffered a double engine loss of power. This conclusion is reached from the following publicly available information:

1. The statement of the pilot that the aircraft had "no thrust".
2. The video footage of the accident that shows the aircraft struggling to gain altitude indicating the engines were not delivering full power.

3. Video and audio footage of the accident that appears to show (and sound like) the deployment of the Ram Air Turbine (RAT). The RAT is a small turbine that is deployed on the underside of the aircraft in circumstances where there is (a) a loss of hydraulic power; (b) a loss of electrical power or (c) a double engine failure. The third option appears to be the most likely in the circumstance.

The official investigation has now confirmed that there was double engine failure in the coming days, but the key question remains "why was there a double engine failure?" This is a rare event but it can be caused by a number of factors. Bird strike has been ruled out by the official investigation, but questions remain as to whether engine failure was caused by a technical failure, fuel mismanagement, maintenance issues or some other cause.

C. What this means for families' legal rights

i. Against Air India

Under international treaties, families are guaranteed to receive compensation from Air India in England or India. England has a more favourable compensation regime than India, awarding compensation at levels that are much higher than in India.

Air India is reinsured into London and London based lawyers have already been instructed to resolve claims against Air India. Our intelligence indicates that the reinsurer has reserved \$125m to settle claims from families under English/Indian law.

Stewarts is the **leading firm in the UK** acting for claimants in aviation accidents worldwide as confirmed in legal directories ([Chambers](#) ; [Legal 500](#)). The team is led by [Sarah Stewart](#) and [Peter Neenan](#), jointly recognised as the **leading claimant aviation lawyers in the UK**. In addition, Stewarts has a **dedicated and preeminent India Practice** ([India Practice](#)) led by [Sherina Petit](#).

Families need experienced English aviation lawyers in order to maximise compensation that they are entitled to under

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English or Indian law. We are ready and able to secure guaranteed compensation for families at the highest levels under English or Indian law against Air India.

In relation to any compensation recovered from Air India, Stewarts will guarantee that families receive 100% of their compensation with no deduction for fees or expenses out of that compensation. Under English litigation rules, our fees are paid by Air India and their insurers.

ii. **Against Boeing**

In the event that the investigation indicates that a technical failure in the Boeing aircraft caused or contributed to the accident, families may have a claim against Boeing in the US.

The claim against Boeing is not guaranteed unlike the claim against Air India; we will need to prove that there was a defect in the aircraft manufacture or design. In addition, while the claim can be brought in the US, there is no guarantee that the US courts will allow it to proceed there if there is an alternative “more convenient” jurisdiction.

In order to succeed in any claim against Boeing, families need the best lawyers in the US. Stewarts has been approached by the two leading claimant aviation law firms in the US, [Clifford Law](#) and [Kreindler & Kreindler](#) to support families who have lost loved ones in this accident, should there be a technical failure in the Boeing aircraft.

Clifford Law and Kreindler & Kreindler represented almost all the families from the Boeing 737 Max cases in the Illinois courts (between them representing families of 137 of the 157 passengers onboard). We will support families in identifying which of these leading US law firms they would like us to work with, based on your preferences.

As the top 3 claimant aviation law firms in the world, Stewarts, Clifford Law and Kreindler & Kreindler have unrivalled strength and depth to support families following this tragedy.

Our fee for this work is a no-win no-fee US contingency

fee agreement, meaning that families pay nothing up front and only if we win, and our fees are based on how much compensation we obtain for them.

E. **What happens now**

Families do not need to file proceedings in any jurisdiction at this time and doing so will in all likelihood negatively affect their legal rights in the future. We would strongly encourage families to take this time to grieve, repatriate their loved ones, without being pressured by lawyers to bring premature legal proceedings in any jurisdiction.

All families should be represented by specialist lawyers who have first-hand experience in international aviation accidents. Families should not seek the services of claims management companies or investigators for legal representation.

If you would like to learn more about how Stewarts can help your family, please contact Sarah Stewart at ssewart@stewartslaw.com or Peter Neenan at pneenan@stewartslaw.com.

“Stewarts leaves no stone unturned and ensures matters are thoroughly and carefully investigated... The lawyers at Stewarts are not only skilled in air law, but have technical expertise as well”

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