

ALL CLEAR?



CALL-SIGN CONFUSION

Video Scenario Transcript

This document contains the full transcript to the Call-Sign Confusion Video scenario. Some additional scene notes are included to aid interpretation.

BUSY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE (Casual Setting)

GRAHAM

Well, this is the AREA Control Centre, ah the ATCOs through here are very busy with arrivals and departures from several major airports in the area.

I think it's time for coffee.

(moving to kitchen)

COLLEAGUE

Hey Graham how's your dog – is he back from the vets?

GRAHAM

Yeah, hah but he's afraid of heights and water now!

I'm getting a coffee would you like one?

COLLEAGUE

Uh uh .. I'm fine thank you.

INTERVIEWER

So what sort of procedures do you use to limit misunderstandings when there are lots of aircraft from the same airline?

GRAHAM

Well generally the call signs are quite different but any that do sound similar are usually identified to everyone on the frequency. Huh hah ... it doesn't always work though.

INTERVIEWER

Have you had any incidents recently?

GRAHAM

Ah well yes ... I had one quite recently.

In this part of the TMA there are three separate holding areas, two of which are quite close together so we merge the arrivals together before they intercept the ILS.

On this particular day there were these two aircraft, one in each of the two separate holds, that were vectored off the stack in close succession and I was planning to get the more distant one to then follow the other into final approach.

Flashback (momentary view of ATC screen)

AJET2062. COCKPIT.

CAPTAIN AJet2062

Ladies, and gentlemen, this is the captain once again. Well the good news is we've just received our onward clearance from Air Traffic Control ... now we'll be leaving the HOLD and making our final approach very shortly and we'll be on the ground in ah.. in ten minutes time.

We should be landing just about ten minutes behind schedule .. thanks for your continued patience.

(momentary view of ATC screen)
AJET2036. COCKPIT.

FIRST OFFICER AJet2036

I hope it's not too long before we're out of this hold!

(R/T can be heard from the Stack controller issuing an instruction to AJet2036)

"AJet2036 fly heading 015, contact approach 118 decimal 125"

CAPTAIN AJet2036

Fly heading 015, contact approach 118 decimal 125 AJet2036.

(Captain AJet2036 changes over to the approach frequency 118.125)

CAPTAIN AJet2036

Approach AJet2036 heading 015.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE. APPROACH.

GRAHAM (as Approach Controller)

AJet2036 maintain heading and level.

CAPTAIN (AJet2036)

AJet2036 Roger maintaining heading and level.

GRAHAM

Finair 812 November estimated approach time 1218.

FINAIR

1218 copied Finair 812 November.

GRAHAM

AlphaJet2036 descend altitude 4000 ft QNH 1004.

AJET2036. COCKPIT.

CAPTAIN (AJET2036)

Descending altitude 4000 ft QNH 1004 AJet2036.

FIRST OFFICER (AJet2036)

4000ft.

That was pretty quick.

Flash-forward

BUSY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE (Casual setting)

GRAHAM

I really don't know why it happened but I had the two aircraft call signs mixed up in my head and I was issuing instructions to the wrong aircraft!

The next instruction to direct him onto a normal base leg heading must have confused him ...

Flashback

(momentary view of ATC screen)

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE. (Approach)

GRAHAM (as Approach Controller)

AJet2036 turn left heading 040.

AJET2036. COCKPIT.

CAPTAIN (AJET2036)

Does he mean 040, that's back towards the stack?

CAPTAIN (AJET2036)

Confirm heading 040 AJet2036.

Flash-forward

BUSY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE (Casual setting)

GRAHAM

My mistake then became quite obvious as I looked at the two aircraft, I could see the wrong one was descending.

There was no room for such an error because of the traffic beneath, so I became quite anxious ...

Flashback

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE. (Approach)

GRAHAM (as Approach Controller – with urgency)

AJet2036 climb immediately FL90 I say again climb immediately FL90.

CAPTAIN (AJET2036)

Climbing FL90 AJet2036.

GRAHAM

AJet2062 descend altitude 4000 feet QNH1004 turn left heading 040.

Flash-forward

BUSY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTRE (Casual setting)

GRAHAM

It was only because of the pilots request for confirmation that I realised the mistake, and thankfully it was resolved before anything more serious happened.