

# [American airlines flight 587 term paper examples](https://assignbuster.com/american-airlines-flight-587-term-paper-examples/)

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On November 12, 2001 at 9: 16 eastern standard time, an Airbus A300
belonging to American airlines, which was a regular passenger flight from New York's

## John F. Kennedy International airport to Santo Domingo's Las Americas international

Airport in the Dominican Republic crashed in a few moments after take off. The crash
zone was a residential area called Belle Harbor, in neighborhood of Queens in New
York city near John F. Kennedy International airport. Unfortunately in this tragic
accident 265 people were killed including all 251 passengers plus 2 flight
crewmembers, 7 flight attendants and 5 people on the ground, no one survived from
this accident. This accident is considered to be the second-deadliest accident within

## American borders, after American Airlines Flight 191.

The captain, 42 years old, was hired in July 1985 by American Airlines, holding an
airline transport pilot certificate and Federal Aviation Administration first-class medical
certificate, that had no limitations. He had already received a type rating on the A300
as a first officer and received a type rating on Boeing 727. In August 1998 he
completed basic operating experience as an A300 captain.

## The victims almost had American nationality. 176 passengers, 9 flight crews and 5

people who were killed on the ground. There were also 68 passengers from

## Dominican Republic, 3 passengers from Taiwan, 1 passenger from France, 1 from

Haiti, 1 from Israel and 1 from United Kingdom. In memory of the victims a memorial
was constructed in rockaway Park.

## Cause

According to reports the vertical stabilizer and rudder of the plane were separated, it
was found in 1 mile north of the wreckage, as it fell in Jamaica bay. The engines were
separated in flight, they were found in north and east of the crash zone. The airplane
lost it's control and landed on top of a house, and a horrible explosion in result.

## Flight 587 immediately after Japan airlines Boeing 747-400 took off, on the same

runway. The A300 flew in an area of turbulent air as it flew into larger jet's wake.

## The first officer tried to stabilize the airplane with alternative aggressive rudder inputs.

In result the rudder was stressed by the strength of the air flowing against it,
eventually it was snapped off completely, and in result airplane lost it's control and
crashed. Basically the vertical stabilizer is connected by six attaching points to the
fuselage and each point consists of two sets of attachment lugs, one made of
composite material, the other of aluminum, all fixed by a titanium bolt. In this case the
aluminum plugs were intact but not the composite lugs. It convinced the investigators
were not as strong as they were supposed to be and it was a great concern as they
are used in other parts of the aircraft such as wings and engine mounting. The
stabilizers from the accident aircraft and another similar aircraft were examined and
they found out that the strength of the composite materials had not been compromised
and according to NTSB the material had been failed due to overload of stress beyond
it’s design limit. Though in ten previous incidents where the tails had been
stressed over the design limit did not lead to separation of vertical stabilizer during the
flight.

## National Transportation Safety Board findings

According to official report of NTSB on October 26, 2004, the rudder was over used
hundreds of people witnessed it. 349 people accounted NTSB about what they saw.
about half (52%) of the witnesses reported that there was a fire an explosion before it
hit the ground. The others reported a wing detach from the airplane, as in fact it was
the vertical stabilizer.

## Both engines also were separated before the airplane hit the ground. There were no

evidence of engine pre impact failure or ruptures, the engines’ operation was normal
during all stages including initial ground operations, takeoff and initial climb. According
had lost it’s control and it was followed by separation of the vertical stabilizer.

## The primary fire or explosion that the witnesses reported must be regarding to the

engines separation or a fire the initial fuel release.

## The reaction of the first officer to wake up turbulence encounter was analyzed too,

several pilots of the American Airlines were interviewed, specifically those who had
experience of flying with the first officer and most of the comments were positive in
general. But two of them had noteworthy accounts about the reaction of the first
officer to wake turbulence encounters. According to one of them in a flight on 1997 in
a turbulence encounter the first officer overreacted to that wake wake turbulence
encounter, as he mentioned the " first officer responded to it by making series of rapid,
alternating full rudder pedal inputs", which were quite aggressive. And finally it
caused uncomfortable movements with side loads on the aircraft.

## According to this captain when he asked the first officer about his reaction, the officer

answered that he has used the rudder to balance the wings and also advised him to use the
rudder that way. The mentioned captain also remembers another situation
where during takeoff, first officer had the same reaction with rapid rudder inputs, but
he was not sure if the first officer pushed the pedals till the stop point.

## In further investigations it was found out that such series of rapid and alternating

rudder inputs resulted in separation of the vertical stabilizer.

## Conclusion

According to NTSB, due to the " unnecessary and excessive" rudder inputs given by
the first officer caused the enormous stress on rudders. Later they stated that the
airplane would have stabilized, if the first officer had stopped making unnecessary
inputs the plane could be stabilized.

## This crash was almost American Airline’s fault because their pilot were not trained enough to

know the characteristics of the rudder properly.

## Works Cited

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