

## PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 0400 UTC 10 April 2005

### **The International Federation of Airline pilots Associations honours DHL Baghdad crew for exceptional airmanship**

CAPE TOWN 10 April 2005 – At last night's Annual Conference Dinner the International Federation of Air Line Pilot's Associations (IFALPA) honoured Captain Eric Genotte, First Officer Steeve Michielsen and Flight Engineer Mario Rofail for their exceptional airmanship when their aircraft was attacked and struck by a surface to air missile (SAM).

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2003, the crew departed Baghdad bound for the DHL hub at Bahrain. Shortly after take off as their A300 passed 8,000ft, it was struck on the left wing by a SA-14 Gremlin surface to air missile (SAM). The impact from the SAM and subsequent fire resulted in a complete loss of hydraulics which rendered all flight controls, including trim, useless. Reacting rapidly, Captain Genotte recalled a television documentary he had seen about a DC-10 crash at Sioux City, Iowa some years before and the techniques employed by Captain Al Haynes and his crew to control their aircraft. Although Genotte, Michielsen and Rofail had never practiced the techniques before, they quickly gained control despite the extreme stress of the situation. By using a combination of differential and other thrust changes the crew were able to turn their crippled aircraft back to Baghdad and set up for an approach to the runway they had just left. Unhappy with their set up the crew carried out a missed approach before returning to land on runway 33L just before one of the engines failed from fuel starvation. Without nose wheel steering the crew was unable to control the direction of the roll out and the aircraft exited the side of the runway travelling a further 600 metres through soft sand before coming to a halt.

Notes to Editors

*The Polaris Award is granted by IFALPA for acts of exceptional airmanship, heroic action or a combination of these two attributes.*

*The International Federation of Air Line Pilots Associations (IFALPA) is the global voice of airline pilots it represents over 100,000 pilots in more than 95 countries world-wide. IFALPA's mission is to promote the highest levels of aviation safety and security globally.*

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