

0. UNAUTHORIZED TAKE-OFF - Story Preface

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4. UNAUTHORIZED TAKE-OFF

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This image, from KLM's contemporary promotional materials, depicts Captain "Jaap" van Zanten. He was the pilot in command of KLM 4805 on the day it flew into Pan Am 1736.

As the KLM made its 180-degree turn at the end of the runway, it was about 5:05 p.m. (17.05) local time. The Dutch crew was inching closer to flying time restrictions.

Captain van Zanten opened the jet's throttles and prepared to take off even before he had received ATC (Air Traffic Control) clearance. His first officer, Klass Meurs, admonished the captain:

Wait a minute, we don't have an ATC clearance.

Closing the throttles, the captain said:

No, I know that, go ahead, ask.

First Officer Meurs advised the TFN tower:

KLM 4805 is now ready for take-off and we are waiting for our ATC clearance.

At 17.05:53, the Tenerife tower advised KLM 4805:

KLM 4805, you are cleared to the papa beacon, climb to and maintain flight level nine zero. Right turn after take-off, proceed with heading zero four zero until intercepting the three three five radial from Las Palmas VOR.

Before the controller finished speaking, and before his first officer repeated the ATC instructions (for their flight pattern following take off), Captain van Zanten said, "Yes," and slightly opened the thrust levers. The plane was still held back by its brakes. The engines began to stabilize.

KLM 4805, however, did not-yet have permission to take off.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/UNAUTHORIZED-TAKE-OFF-Tenerife-Deadliest-Air-Accident>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/UNAUTHORIZED-TAKE-OFF-Tenerife-Deadliest-Air-Accident>

Media Stream

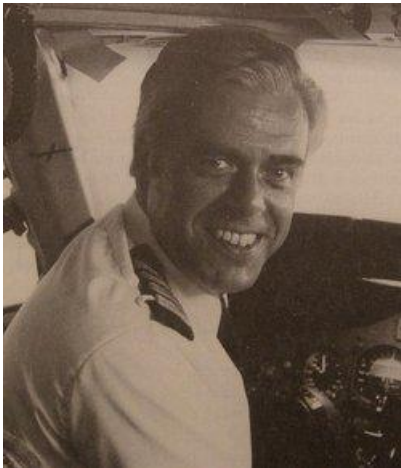


Klass Meurs, First Officer of KLM 4805

Image online, courtesy project-tenerife.com website.

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