

### JUMBO 747-400 CRASH RECOVERY

Client : Hong Kong Civil Aviation Authority

Coordinator : The Hong Kong Salvage & Towage  
Company Limited

Location : Kai Tak Intl. Airport, Hong Kong

Water Depth : 0-20 msw



A Boeing 747-400 Jumbo-jet crashed in bad weather whilst trying to land at Hong Kong's international airport. Miraculously, there were no fatalities nor any serious injuries when the aircraft overshot the runway and ploughed into the harbour waters. The subsequent salvage operation, unprecedented in aviation history, became a race against time. This was mainly because the position of the ditched aircraft was preventing operations on one runway and restricting those on another.

#### PHOTOGRAPHS :

Top: Attachment of 5t air lift bags to float aircraft at crash site.

Opposite: Jumbo under tow on Seaflex air lift bags.

Bottom: HKST crane barge 'Proteus 1' lifting stricken aircraft



The plane had come to rest in shallow water with the vertical tail fin obstructing the flightpath. This was removed by The Royal Hong Kong Police using explosives. The fuselage was patched and pumped out prior to being towed to a specially laid mooring. Seaflex air lift bags were used for the re-floating, tow and mooring of the aircraft.

After careful preparation, HKST's 350t floating crane barge 'Proteus 1' lifted the aircraft while a smaller crane alongside supported the nose. With 184 tonnes of Seaflex lift still attached as a precaution, the entire spread was moved 2 miles by tugs to the landing site ashore.

#### Despatch Note

Seaflex received the order at 1535hrs and by 1930hrs that evening, 304 tonnes of fully enclosed lift, packed on air-freight pallets, had left our factory bound for Heathrow Airport.

Our thanks to Alan Lloyd, Fleet Manager, Hong Kong Salvage & Towage Co. Ltd. for operational details and photographs.

