



- 1 Complete the report below using words from the box.

checks communicating consciousness holding maintenance masks
military oxygen pressurize pressurizing sounding starvation

Air craft failed to pressurize

In August 2005, a Boeing 737 crashed near Athens. There were no survivors among the 115 passengers and six crew members on board. Investigations soon identified the failure of the plane to (1) _____ after take-off as the main cause of this accident. The pressurization switch should be set to 'Auto' before take-off. It had been left out of position during (2) _____ the night before, and the pilots did not notice this problem while performing their pre-flight (3) _____. Once the aircraft had climbed to 10,000 feet, an alarm went off in the cockpit to warn the pilots that the aircraft was not (4) _____. However, the pilots mistakenly believed that the alarm was the take-off configuration warning, and they switched it off.

After the aircraft had climbed above 14,000 feet, oxygen (5) _____ were automatically deployed in the cabin. There was a warning light in the cockpit to show that this had occurred, but the pilots were distracted by another alarm which was (6) _____ and which they believed signified an equipment cooling system problem. As the aircraft continued to climb on autopilot, both pilots became disoriented and began to suffer from hypoxia, due to their lack of (7) _____. There is no indication in the pilots' communications with air traffic controllers that they had any idea of the danger they faced. If they had realized, they would certainly have put on their oxygen masks in time to begin an emergency descent and then, once at a safe level, they would have tried to determine why the aircraft had not pressurized.

Within a few minutes, both pilots had lost (8) _____. The aircraft continued as far as Athens on autopilot, escorted by (9) _____ jets. When contact was lost with the crew, the authorities feared a terrorist attack. The aircraft entered a (10) _____ pattern and circled until both engines flamed out due to fuel (11) _____. It then crashed into a hillside about 40 km from Athens.

One pilot was German and the other Cypriot. An additional factor contributing to this accident could be the difficulty the two pilots had (12) _____ in English in a stressful situation. The lack of oxygen could only have made things worse.

- 2 Some safety experts believe that solving complex technical problems in the cockpit requires that pilots share the same first language. Do you agree?
- 3 Do you believe that there should be an international regulation stating that a flight crew must share the same first language?