

1 Read and complete the text with the words in the box.

alerted bang circled emergency failure fuel passengers regulations return shut

## ***Jumbo flies across the Atlantic on just three engines***

A Boeing 747 had to (1) \_\_\_\_\_ down one of its four engines just after taking off from Los Angeles on a flight bound for Heathrow airport. The aircraft subsequently continued its flight to London. It eventually needed to make an (2) \_\_\_\_\_ landing in Manchester, due to concerns over low (3) \_\_\_\_\_ levels. Some aviation safety experts have questioned the decision of the pilots to continue with the flight rather than returning to Los Angeles. The airline issued a statement saying that safety was not compromised at any time, and that the aircraft was able to operate on its three remaining engines with no risk to (4) \_\_\_\_\_.

Air traffic controllers and local residents saw sparks coming from the engine and passengers reported hearing a loud (5) \_\_\_\_\_ just after take-off. The aircraft climbed to 5,000 ft and (6) \_\_\_\_\_ for some time while the pilots decided what to do next. They informed passengers of the engine (7) \_\_\_\_\_ and contacted their company offices to discuss the situation. They then took the decision to continue the flight.

Critics have claimed that the pilots might have been under commercial pressure to take this decision, as a (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to Los Angeles airport would have left the airline with an expensive bill for compensating the 351 passengers on board. Under new European (9) \_\_\_\_\_, this bill could have been as high as \$200,000. The airline, however, denies that this was a factor in the decision taken to fly on across the Atlantic.

Controllers at Los Angeles airport were apparently surprised at the pilots' decision to carry on. They had (10) \_\_\_\_\_ fire services in the expectation that the aircraft would return. Comments from safety experts have varied. Some claim that it is not a problem to lose one engine on a four-engine aircraft. They point out that there are lots of twin-engine aircraft crossing the Atlantic. Others are convinced that the new European regulations will inevitably increase the pressure on pilots in such situations. The debate is likely to continue.

2 Work in pairs. Discuss the following questions.

Do you agree that the pilots were under commercial pressure?

Would you have wanted to continue the flight to the UK if you had been a passenger on this flight?

Do you know other airlines' policies about what to do in such situations?

At the moment there is no international regulation on this particular issue, do you think there should be?

3 Discuss the following question as a class.

Do you think that the pilots made the correct decision?