

SETTANTA VITE IMMORTALI

Olgiate Olona - 26 giugno



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Worst disasters of civil aviation in Italy

The plane crash of Olgiate Olona of June 26, 1959 - already worse than the crash occurred at Superga (Turin) ten years before (May 4, 1949) - is to date the most serious disaster occurred near Milano-Malpensa Airport and the fifth worst disaster of civil Aviation in Italy. Here we briefly summarize the other four air disasters:



(photo Marco Maniaci)

Montagna Longa (May 5, 1972)

Alitalia Douglas DC-8 43 I-DIWB *Antonio Pigafetta* flight AZ 112, while landing at Palermo-Punta Raisi Airport (the airport is now entitled to magistrates Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, victims of the Mafia) crashed against the mountain Montagna Longa between Cinisi e Carini: all 7 crew members and 108 passengers perished. During the trial the pilots who were proved not to follow the air traffic controllers' instructions were declared responsible for the disaster, but according to some relatives of the victims the aircraft would have disintegrated due to a terrorist attack..



(photo Massimo Cometa)

Punta Raisi (December 23, 1978)

Alitalia Douglas DC-9-32 I-DIKQ *Isola di Stromboli*, flight AZ 4128 Rome-Palermo, sank into the sea after being broken in two, shortly far from Palermo-Punta Raisi Airport at 0.38 a.m.: 108 people perished, 5 crew members and 103 passengers; twenty-one survived. The cause of the disaster was traced to procedural errors.



(photo Alberto Alpozzi)

Ustica (June 27, 1980)

Itavia Douglas DC-9 I-TIGI, flight IH870 Bologna-Palermo, in the sky between the islands of Ustica and Ponza at 8.50 p.m. sank into the sea after being broken with 4 crew members and 77 passengers aboard. The details regarding that disaster are not clear yet, different hypothesis have been considered: plane hit by a missile, bomb aboard, collision (in the south area of Tyrrhenian Sea a military exercise was underway), structural failure. The plane's wreckage - sank 3,700 meters in depth - was recovered (65%) in two stages (1987 and 1991) and reassembled in a hangar of Pratica di Mare Airport first, and since 2006 in the museum for the memory of Ustica opened in Bologna on June 27, 2007. The disaster was subject of debate in the Parliamentary Committee on the massacres. According to the judgment of the trial filed August 31, 1999 the DC-9 was involved in an aerial battle in which the Libyan MiG-23ms found in Castelsilano on July 18, 1980 took part. In Assize Court and Court of Appeal two trials were held on the presumed false leads of investigations: almost all the defendants were absolved, for those found guilty the offense fell into a prescription. In 2013 the Supreme Court - stating that a missile hit the aircraft and got it to fall, and that the investigation on the disaster has been the subject of many false leads - confirmed the judgment delivered in 2010 by the Court of Appeal which condemns the State to compensate the families of three victims of Ustica which have filed a civil suit for this purpose. This provision supports the hypothesis that the State should indemnify the families of all the victims of Ustica, starting from those who have filed a similar civil suit whose trial has been postponed to 2014.



Milan-Linate (October 8, 2001)

Scandinavian Airlines System (Sas) McDonnell Douglas MD-87, flight SK 686, Copenhagen bound, during take-off collided on track with a Cessna Citation airplane due to fog and crashed against the luggage warehouse at 8.10 a.m.: 118 people (the passengers of two aircrafts and four employees at baggage handling) perished in the disaster, the worst occurred in Italy; only one survivor. A series of events originated the disaster: low visibility, inadequate signaling, Cessna pilot error, ground radar not operating, air traffic controller errors, rescue not timely. The trial at first instance started in 2003 and was divided into two sections (ordinary iter, abbreviated trial): the ordinary iter settled the perpetual interdiction from public office to four defendants and forced them jointly and severally, with Enav and ENAC, to pay damages and legal costs; the abbreviated trial came to judgement on April 16, 2004 absolving three of the eleven defendants and condemning the other eight with penalties from three years and ten months to eight years imprisonment. The Court of Appeal came to judgement on July 7, 2006 with the

acquittal of two defendants, settlement of three defendants, and six other condemned to imprisonment from two years and eight months up to six years and six months. All the sentences were reduced to three years thanks to the pardon (law 241 of July 31, 2006) approved by a large majority in Parliament and referred to crimes committed until May 2, 2006. After the appeal of Milan prosecutors, the Supreme Court of Cassation issued the final judgment on February 20, 2008: appeals were rejected, the judgment of the Court of Appeal was confirmed in its entirety. "Comitato 8 ottobre per non dimenticare" committee was founded in Milan in 2001 by the relatives of the victims of the air disaster.

Website dedicated to this disaster: <http://www.comitato8ottobre.com>