

## Short Investigation Bulletin

**DATE:** 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2020  
**REPORT #** AO-20-000160  
**AIRCRAFT REGISTRATION:** HBAL074  
**INVESTIGATION STATUS:** Closed

### Summary

Occurrence Bulletins are concise reports that detail the facts surrounding an aviation occurrence, as received in the initial notification and any follow-up enquiries. They provide an opportunity to share safety messages in the absence of a full investigation.

Released as required, the Bulletin provides a summary of the less-complex factual investigation reports conducted by the AAIA. The results, based on information supplied by organizations or individuals involved in the occurrence, detail the facts behind the event, as well as any safety actions undertaken. When applicable, the Bulletin also highlights important Safety Messages for the broader aviation community, drawing on earlier AAIA investigations and research.

### General Details

<b>Date and Time of Occurrence:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> April, 2020			
<b>Location</b>	San Salvador, Bahamas			
<b>Persons on Board</b>	Crew	0	Passengers	0
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew	0	Passengers	0
<b>Commanders License:</b>	N/A			
<b>Occurrence category:</b>	Incident			
<b>Occurrence type:</b>				
<b>Investigation status:</b>	Closed			

### Aircraft Details

<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Balloon, HBAL074
<b>Year of Manufacture &amp; Serial #:</b>	Unknown,
<b>Number and Type of Engine(s)</b>	0
<b>Type of operation:</b>	Corporate
<b>Information Source:</b>	Field Investigation
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	None

## Occurrence Summary

On 12 April, 2020 the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority (AAIA) was notified of what appeared to be a crashed balloon with equipment similar to a satellite attached. This recovery was made near San Salvador, Bahamas and was subsequently turned over to the Police department on the Island.

According to the representation of Loon, a Google Affiliate Company ([www.loon.com](http://www.loon.com)) which owns the balloon, the Stratospheric Internet and communication Balloon HBAL074 was launched from their facility on José Aponte de la Torre Airport (TJRV) on 2019-12-04 at 22:50:02Z and landed on 2020-04-12 at 09:30:00Z about 1nm West of Bonefish Bay off San Salvador Island (Lat. Lon: 24.0573, -74.5487):

The Balloons are launched worldwide in areas of reduced communication and internet capability to assist with such connectivity in remote and mountainous areas specifically.

According to the representative “we had coordinated the descent in advance with ATC and hired the local crew prior to landing to execute on the retrieval.” The representative also stated the balloon had reached its useful life as the batteries were depleted, so a planned retrieval and landing of the balloon was organized.

A limited scope investigation was conducted, and as a result, there were no recommendations issued.



Photo from [www.loon.com](http://www.loon.com)



*This Occurrence Bulletin contains facts which have been determined up to the time of issue. It is published to inform the aviation industry and the public of the general circumstances of accidents and serious incidents and should be regarded as tentative and subject to alteration or correction if additional evidence becomes available.*

*All AAIA investigations are conducted in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, and The Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority Act and Regulations. The sole objective of the investigation of an accident or incident under these Regulations is the prevention of future accidents and incidents. It is not the purpose of such an investigation to apportion blame or liability. Accordingly, it is inappropriate that AAIA reports should be used to assign fault or blame or determine liability, since neither the investigation nor the reporting process has been undertaken for that purpose.*