

Smoke forces emergency landing - crew member dies

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Geneva: A Swiss International Air Lines cabin crew member has died after an aircraft was forced to make an emergency landing due to smoke inside the cabin, the airline announced on Monday (Dec 30).

The Airbus A220-300, carrying 74 passengers and five crew members, was en route from Bucharest to Zurich on December 23 when it experienced engine issues, causing smoke to fill the cockpit and cabin. The plane made a safe emergency landing in Graz, Austria.

"We are devastated at our dear colleague's death," he said.

"Our thoughts are with his family, whose pain we cannot imagine. I offer them my heartfelt condolences on behalf of all of us at Swiss."

Swiss said in a statement that "out of respect for the loved ones, we will not provide detailed information about our employee or the cause of death."

After the plane made an emergency landing, one cabin crew member was flown by helicopter to a hospital in Graz and taken into intensive care.

Another cabin crew member was also taken to hospital.

All passengers were evacuated and 12 received medical attention. Swiss on Tuesday said that all passengers who were admitted to hospital had since been able to leave.

Chief operating officer Oliver Buchhofer thanked the local emergency services in Graz who had helped passengers and crew.

"This is the saddest of days for us all," he said.

"Losing our colleague and fellow member of our Swiss team leaves me distraught and dismayed."

He said Swiss would work "with the relevant authorities, to determine the causes involved."

Swiss said the focus of its investigation was on the mechanical parts of the aircraft, such as the engine, but also on the use of protective breathing equipment for the cabin crew.

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