

# NEW YORK POST

## 'SPEED' DOOMED FLT. 447

By BILL SANDERSON

June 5, 2009 --

Air France Flight 447 was either flying too fast or too slow for the conditions it encountered inside a monstrous thunderstorm cloud over the South Atlantic, investigators suggested yesterday.

### Air France Flight 447 Search & Rescue

Either way, the speed of the Airbus A330's speed was "wrong," investigation sources told the French newspaper Le Monde. Airbus planned to issue an "recommendation" to pilots advising them to maintain proper speed and to keep their planes level in adverse weather, the paper said.

Investigators believe the A330 broke up in flight and fell to the ocean in pieces. A Brazilian helicopter crew yesterday recovered two buoys and a cargo pallet from the craft. No remains of the 228 people onboard have been found.

Flying too fast inside the violent storm cloud could have shaken the aircraft apart, pilots told The Post. "Fast would not be good. It's like going over a bumpy road," said Jim Burin, a former Navy pilot who works for the Flight Safety Foundation.

And if the jet flew too slow, "microbursts or some sort of wind condition" could have knocked it from the sky, Burin said.

Inside the storm, the pilots' job was to keep the plane on a steady course, said Dan Rose, also a former Navy pilot and a lawyer with the Manhattan aviation-law firm Kreindler & Kreindler.

"Beyond that, you are really along for the ride," said Rose. "The only thing you want to do is keep the wings of the aircraft as level as possible."

Possibly adding to the pilots' problem was a freeze-up in the plane's airspeed sensors, which might have sent bad data to the cockpit and the plane's computers because they were clogged with ice or hail, The Wall Street Journal reported.

The significance of the freezing problem could be explained by the jet's black boxes -- if they're ever retrieved.

"It could be that the storm itself was so strong, there was nothing that could have been done," said Rose.

The Air France crew was unwise or unlucky to have entered the storm at all, Rose said. Pilots normally avoid such gigantic storm clouds, and the Airbus crew should have spotted the storm on their radar, he said.

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Another European airliner flew around the storm at the time of the Air France crash, a Spanish newspaper reported. The pilot of that plane reported seeing a flash of light inside the storm that he believes may have been the Airbus disintegrating.

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