

On August 26, 2010 Jet Blue Airlines Flight 262 was scheduled to depart at 11:19am. We actually pushed back about 20 minutes late from Long Beach Airport and landed at 12:50pm at Sacramento Airport. The flight was normal in nature during climb out, cruise, and descent. However, the SMF tower asked us to turn an early right base in order to make enough airspace between our aircraft and a United aircraft that was on a long final to 16R. We said we would help them out by making an early right base so I started getting the aircraft ready for a quicker descent than usual.

The final descent from 5000 feet is where I began configuring the aircraft with full speed brakes, flaps, gear, and I disconnected the autopilot as I hand flew the aircraft all the way to landing. We were cleared for the visual approach on the downwind leg to 16R. After turning base to final I had the aircraft fully configured for landing by 1300 feet MSL and continued making a normal visual approach on glideslope and on speed to what I thought would be a normal touchdown and landing at SMF Airport. However, that isn't what resulted. The touchdown on the main wheels was soft for only a split second before the nose gear came down much quicker and harder than I've ever experienced in the past.

All four main gear tires blew and caught fire as we skidded to an abrupt stop on runway 16R. I was the flying pilot while the captain was the non flying pilot. As soon as we touched down I knew there was something significantly wrong and I told the captain that I think we blew our tires, so he took control of the aircraft as we came to a stop. When we finally came to a stop he set the parking brake, and asked the tower what they saw from their vantage point. They replied that they saw lots of sparks and smoke coming from the tires as we skidded down the runway. He then spoke over the public address system of the aircraft telling the cabin crew to be prepared at stations.. The captain then called the tower again to ask if they could still see smoke and fire coming from our tires. They replied yes, we see a lot of black smoke coming from the landing gear. The captain then asked me to pull out the Evacuation - QRC Quick Reference Checklist and complete it while he got more information from the tower and the fire crew as they were just arriving onto the scene. I then proceeded to execute the checklist by reading out loud and doing what it said. As I got to the engine and APU fire extinguisher checklist I asked the captain if he wanted to blow the squibs on all of these items and he told me not to execute those functions at this time since we didn't have fires in the engines or APU, so I skipped those steps and continued securing the airplane following the checklist.

After I finished with the evacuation checklist, I informed the captain checklist complete and he decided that the fire and smoke was still prevalent and that we would proceed with an emergency evacuation. He hit the evacuation horn and told the flight attendants easy victor over the public address system. I went immediately into action and exited the flight deck through the flight deck door and went down the L1 slide. The flight attendants started yelling to the passengers to get out over and over, so the passengers began exiting the plane very quickly down the slides. I helped stop and catch the passengers at the bottom of the L1 slide so they wouldn't fly off and hurt themselves as they exited the slide one after another. The passengers came down the slide very fast and it seemed like slow motion for about 30 seconds. I could see the fire still burning the tires while people were coming down the slides and all I could think of was how fast can we get all 87 passengers off the airplane and away from danger. Once the fire crews got to the L1 slide to help out I went to the L2 rear slide of the aircraft to help passengers. Then I ran to the R1 slide and helped more passengers who were hurt on the ground. As the last passenger got off the airplane, the three flight attendants exited down their respective slides, and then the captain searched through the airplane with the flight deck fire extinguisher looking for anymore people that might have stayed on board. The captain then came down the slide and we as a crew congregated all the passengers away from the plane into grass areas on the sides of runway 16R. At this time there were three different groups of passengers in three different locations. \

I heard a police officer say that 15 passengers were hurt. Ten with minor injuries from coming down the slides, and five that I saw were hurt worse, one twisted her ankle, one hurt her knee, one hit her lip on another persons head coming down the slide, another lady slid off the bottom of the slide onto her tailbone, and others got hit in their backs from behind as people came down the slides so quickly. I continued asking who was hurt and what emergency care they needed. I waved emergency personnel over to passengers who needed help. \

After the wheel fires were extinguished, all of the passengers that were okay walked over to the east side of the aircraft next to the triage area at the A8 intersection sign that was set up for the people that were hurt. The passengers that were hurt bad were being attended to by the paramedics and the rest of the passengers that weren't hurt just waited in a big group until buses arrived to take them to the terminal. Our flight crew all stayed together at the aircraft until the FAA investigator arrived and asked us questions about the incident. We answered his questions until he was done and then we were escorted to the terminal where we waited an hour or more for a ride to an undisclosed hotel away from the media circus that was going on outside of the Sacramento Airport. Once getting to the hotel the captain and I were asked to submit to an alcohol and drug test which we complied with , and after we completed those tests we were released to our hotel rooms to rest and get some food.

The following day we were asked to meet at 9am August 27, 2010 and go through a debriefing by the safety department at Jet Blue Airlines. We described the event and answered many questions about the whole event as we remembered it.

I am very relieved nobody got hurt worse than they did coming down the slides. I feel that our crew did the job as we were trained by Jet Blue to get all of the passengers off of the aircraft as quickly as possible.

Sincerely, Derek Kyle Lee Crewmember [REDACTED]