

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
**Investigative Hearing**

Alaska Airlines Flight 1282

Boeing 737-9, N704AL

Left Mid Exit Door Plug Separation in Portland, OR

January 5, 2024

<b>Docket No.</b>	<b>SA-543</b>
<b>EXHIBIT</b>	
6C	

**Survival Factors Group Chair's  
Factual Report - Attachment 2**  
(14 Pages)

DCA24MA063

## **SURVIVAL FACTORS**

Group Chair's Factual Report - Attachment 2

Passenger Interview Summaries

June 28, 2024

Interview: Male Passenger 27E and Female Passenger 27F

Date: January 8, 2024

Representative: Declined

The passengers were traveling together. They both recalled it was warmer than normal during boarding. When they reached their seats, they attempted to open the air vents but did not get much cool air. Another passenger took seat 27D, so their row was full. Passenger 27F noted that seats 26AB were open and passenger 26C was alone. She "had a thought" to ask passenger 26C to switch seats with them so that they could take seats 26A and 26C and he could have 27F - leaving each of their rows with an open middle seat. She planned to sit in 26A but eventually decided not to ask the passenger to switch seats and she remained in seat 27F. Passenger 27E was surprised to see empty seats because there was a long waitlist at the boarding gate. Passenger 27F noted that there was a brother and sister seated in 26DE in front of them. When the cabin door closed the siblings switched to 26D and 26F, leaving the middle seat open. They noted that passenger 27D was the mother of a boy seated across the aisle in 27C. Passenger 27F saw at least two unaccompanied minors walk to the back of the plane including one who was "very, very small."

They both paid attention to the safety demonstration provided by the flight attendants. The airplane sat for a while before moving and the pilot told them they needed to be deiced which took about 20 minutes. Passenger 27F stated the pilot told them the flight time would be 1 hour and 45 minutes. The pilot also stated there would not be much turbulence - except possibly near Ontario due to the winds. Passenger 27E stated they started taxiing about 1700. There were no delays prior to takeoff once they started to taxi. Passenger 27F noted a bit of turbulence after takeoff. She was starting to doze off but recalled seeing the seat belt sign flash and heard a flight attendant announcement that electronic devices could be used in airplane mode and that they would begin service. "Very shortly" after that passenger 27F heard a "loud bang or pop noise." Passenger 27E stated that he did not hear it as much because he had headphones in and was listening to a podcast. He immediately saw the opening in the airplane and the oxygen masks came down. Passenger 27F stated the masks fell in a clump right in front of her. All three passengers in the row tried to get a mask. Passenger 27F stated that retrieving it was more difficult than she thought because there were "a lot of strings" and she was rushing. They both eventually got their masks on although 27E stated that he had a large nose and it was a bit difficult to keep it sealed to his face, so he held it on in addition to the elastic strap being around his head. Neither passenger had trouble donning the mask or experienced any symptoms of hypoxia. They both felt the oxygen flowing in their masks.

Passenger 27F then noticed the hole in the airplane and felt the wind in the cabin. Everyone around them had their masks on and seemed to be getting oxygen. She noticed "smoke or mist" in the cabin with "things floating around." She also

noticed that the airplane was no longer climbing and had levelled out. Everyone stayed seated until she noticed passengers, and perhaps a flight attendant, forward in the cabin gesturing to passengers 25ABC. They eventually got up and were resealed. Passengers 27E and 27F noted one of them was a high school-aged boy who no longer had a shirt on. People also gestured to passenger 26C but he was braced in his seat and did not move for the entire flight.

They noticed the airplane turn and that helped them feel better that the flight crew recognized something was wrong and they were turning around. Passenger 27F saw a flight attendant come from the back and another flight attendant came back from the front. They gestured to each other and then returned to their respective parts of the airplane. They could not hear anything the entire time. It felt like a long time and they were worried about the integrity of the airplane. The wind was hitting them and they were cold. Passenger 26C had a GoPro camera on his wrist and began to film out the hole. They later learned he had lost all of his other belongings including his phone, car keys, and laptop.

They stated that landing was scary because they felt the airplane swaying in the wind. It felt like a standard landing and everyone clapped when they touched down. That was the first noise they heard other than the wind. There was an immediate announcement for them to remain in their seats. A flight attendant came forward and started asking if anyone had been seated in the empty seats. She stated that the passengers had a hard time processing that question and she eventually asked if anyone had been ejected from the airplane. All of the passengers answered "no." Then flight attendants went around asking if anyone was injured. Passengers 27E and 27F noted that passenger 27A had lost both his shoes and his left sock. His leg appeared swollen and bruised. They also recalled that passenger 25A's skin was very red. They saw emergency vehicles outside and paramedics came on board. The flight attendants instructed passengers to remain in their seats and did a headcount and announced that everyone was accounted for. The two injured passengers (25A and 27A) were assessed and the paramedics had them walk off the airplane. Passenger 27F became emotional and was assessed by the paramedics but she said that she was not physically injured. Passenger 27E was also uninjured. They snapped a couple photos of the hole as they deplaned and noted that seat 26A and 25A appeared "pretty mangled."

Interview: Female Passenger 19C  
Date: January 8, 2024  
Representative: Declined

She was flying with her two grandchildren. The check-in process was normal. The grandchildren flew frequently. They bought food to eat on the airplane and candy bars for the flight attendants. Her granddaughter gave the candy bars to the flight attendants as they boarded and said, "thank you for keeping us safe on the flight." Her 7-year-old grandson sat in 19A. Her 5-year-old granddaughter sat in 19B and she sat in 19C. The airplane was a bit delayed for deicing. The airplane took off and there was nothing unusual. She heard the announcement to stay buckled. Not long after, she heard a hissing noise which "sounded as if you were pushing luggage across the ground." When asked how long the hissing lasted, she stated that it was long enough for her to retrieve a salad she had purchased prior to the flight from the floor and put her tray table down. She was about to open it when she pitched forward slightly, which felt like someone putting on the brakes in a car. Then she heard a "boom" and was "shoved back by a gust of wind." The oxygen masks dropped from above her seat. A short time later she heard the pilot announce that it was an emergency decompression and to put on your mask and then assist others. It was so loud she could not hear inside the airplane but communicated via motions with her grandson and confirmed he should put on his mask and he did. She put her mask on and had no difficulty. She then helped her granddaughter. Her grandson still had his headphones on so she removed his mask briefly and took them off so he could hear her and then put his mask on and tightened the elastic strings. Her granddaughter then reminded her that she had not tightened her strings and she did that. They all kept the masks on for the rest of the flight but at some point she did not feel they were receiving oxygen any longer. They prayed and she thought it was getting smokey in the cabin. She pulled down her mask to smell for fire. She looked over her left shoulder and saw the hole in the cabin. There was a mist or haze in the cabin. There was a family in 19DEF with a one-year-old. The mother was seated on the aisle and struggled to keep a mask on the one-year-old.

She stated it was "surreally calm and quiet," other than the wind noise. There was no panic or chaos. She felt they were "plummeting for a bit" while she was putting her mask on then the airplane levelled out. She stated she and her grandchildren had "horrible" ear pain while descending. The pain lasted about 4 hours after landing. Within a few minutes she noticed movement of the male flight attendant in the back and then the forward female flight attendant was also moving around. She was carrying an oxygen bottle strapped to her and was checking on passengers to see if they had their masks on. Two passengers got up at one point and the female flight attendant told them they needed to go back to their seats. When they explained they were in the row near the hole, they were reseated in the forward part of the cabin. At one point she saw a young man without a shirt, but she only saw his arm. She could barely hear her grandchildren. Eventually she recalled

that the pilot made a public address announcement that said to prepare for landing. That was the only public address she heard after the one telling them to put their masks on. The landing was like every other landing she had ever had. There was a cheer when they touched down. There was an announcement to remain seated and that emergency personnel would come on board. When they were told they could leave, everyone deplaned like normal. She noticed one male passenger who was a bit upset and may have been kicking a seat. When asked about injuries to her or her grandchildren, she stated that her face was red and "wind chapped," as were her lips. Her granddaughter also had chapped lips.

Interview: Female Passenger 31F and Male Passenger 31E

Date: January 8, 2024

Representative: Declined

The passengers were traveling together with their 9-month-old daughter. Passenger 31F booked the family's tickets through the Alaska Airlines website or app quite a while ago. She used frequent flyer miles to defray the cost of the tickets and paid for the remainder but she did not want to use all of their miles and pay a lot of money, so she only bought two tickets as her child was able to be boarded as a lap-held infant. She stated that she knew it was recommended to purchase a seat but said "it was allowed, so why not?" When asked, she stated there was nothing in the booking process at all that mentioned an infant until the check-in process on the Alaska Airlines app 24 hours ahead of time. When she checked both her name and passenger 31E's name it asked if either of them was traveling with an infant. She replied yes and entered her daughter's name and birthdate "and that was it. It did not suggest getting her another seat."

Check-in at the airport was easy and getting through security was easy and normal. Passenger 31F flew about 4 times per year and passenger 31E flew about 8 times per year. There was nothing unusual about boarding, taxi or takeoff. They were settling in for the flight and their daughter was on passenger 31F's lap watching a video on a tablet. Everything was smooth and then they heard a "boom." It was an "incredibly loud whoosh of air." Passenger 31E described the noise as being similar to releasing a pressure relief valve on an air compressor. He looked over to his left and saw the hole immediately. Passenger 31F could not see it from the window seat. Passenger 31E did not see anyone in the seat near the hole and thought someone had been sucked out. They realized the oxygen masks had fallen and put them on. He estimated it took 2-4 seconds after the loud noise for them to fall. Passenger 31E put his on first while passenger 31F calmed her baby. Passenger 31E then helped passenger 31F with her mask and their daughter's. He stated that he did have difficulty putting the masks on but it may have been because of how chaotic things were. Their daughter would not allow them to put the mask on her and passenger 31E tried to hold it in front of her face. She was screaming and two children behind them were also screaming but it was so loud it was difficult to hear the screaming. They could not feel a flow of oxygen and their bags were not inflating but their daughter's bag was inflating. Neither felt obvious symptoms of hypoxia but passenger 31E stated that he was breathing heavily. Passenger 31F experienced throbbing pain in her left eye on descent but it subsided once the airplane got on the ground.

Passenger 31E saw a young man who was missing his shirt and said people moved him "pretty quickly" to the other side of the airplane with his mom. His neck was very red. Two or three people helped him and they made sure they had a hold of him before he moved. No one else moved seats or got up. Their daughter eventually

fell asleep during descent. It was very loud but quiet at the same time because none of the passengers were making noise. After landing flight attendants came to the area and asked if anyone had been in that seat and passengers replied that no one had been sitting there. While waiting for everyone to deplane Passenger 31E became frustrated with the masks hanging in front of them and placed them back up into the compartment from which they had fallen out.

When asked about the cabin lighting, passenger 31E stated that he believed the lights were on at the time of the event as they were on in videos he took. However, the lights were turned down at some point on descent. They could hear announcements but they could not understand what anyone was saying during the flight because of how loud it was. They did hear a flight attendant yelling at one point to remain seated. They thought the flight attendants did a great job.



Interview: Female Passenger 25C  
Date: January 9, 2024  
Representative: Declined

She had a wheelchair reserved because she had a bad knee but was able to walk to her seat in the airplane. She stowed her bag in the overhead bin and put her CPAP machine under the seat in front of her. A mother and son with a large backpack came to her row. The son sat in 25A. The mom sat in 25B. They waited about 20 minutes for deicing. Taxi and takeoff were normal. There was no turbulence. The pilot mentioned they were at 10,000 feet and then the wings tilted twice and she thought they had hit an air pocket. She then heard a "loud pop" and she noticed passenger 25B was bent over next to her. She leaned over and asked if she was alright and the woman replied that she was holding onto her son. Passenger 25A no longer had a shirt on and was leaning over holding his mom. She looked behind him and was surprised that nothing was there and that she could see the sky. The mom was asking for help. Passenger 25C noticed the oxygen masks had fallen. She put hers on and tried to put oxygen on passenger 25B. Passenger 25B said to hold onto her son because he had no seat belt on. His right arm was under his mother and passenger 25C grabbed his left wrist with her right hand. She later found out that he had been pulled backwards immediately after the decompression and that was when his shirt had come off. He had yelled for his mom and she had pulled him forward which was how she had initially seen them. Passenger 25C said her mask kept coming off because she forgot to tighten the elastic straps. She put her phone in her lap and had to hold the mask on with her left hand.

Passenger 25C wondered if anyone knew there was a hole in the airplane and how long they would have to hold him that way. Passenger 24D motioned to them and eventually got up and grabbed passenger 25A and helped guide him out of the row to an empty seat. Passenger 25A took his backpack with him. Just a few minutes later a female flight attendant with an oxygen mask came back and told her and passenger 25B that they would be reseated to the front. Passenger 25C was deaf in her left ear and had a hearing aid in her right ear which made it even more difficult to hear. They were reseated somewhere near row 17 on the right side of the airplane where there were two empty seats together. People around them wanted to know what was happening and she told them that there was a hole in the airplane. The airplane descended and landed. She saw a video on the internet of landing and she said she saw herself back in her original seat (without an oxygen mask) but she had no memory of going back there. She took two pictures of the hole in the airplane. Paramedics came on the airplane. Passenger 25B kept asking about her son and was escorted back to see him. When they were allowed to deplane, she gathered her belongings and walked off the airplane and there was a wheelchair there waiting for her.

She added that she had her phone in her hand when the decompression occurred and was able to hold onto it. Passengers 25A and 25B both reported to her that their phones were sucked out of the airplane. She recalled that flight attendants had checked everyone's seat belts prior to the flight and she thought 25A had his on but was not certain. She believed that he did not have it on when he was being held by his mom. His skin was very red. She was not injured.

Interview: Female Passenger 26F

Date: January 9, 2024

Representative: Declined

She was traveling with her brother. Her father dropped them off at the airport and checked them in with an employee who was able to seat them together because, while she was an adult (24), he was a minor (16). She was assigned 26D while he was assigned 26E. They boarded and took their seats but no one took seat 26F. When the door closed she moved to seat 26F and he sat in 26D so they had extra room. She placed their carry-on bag beneath the middle seat. She watched an employee spray water on the wing with a high pressure hose.

After takeoff, the airplane climbed above the clouds and she took a picture of the remnants of the sunset. They both had headphones on. She felt a little turbulence and then there was a "big whoosh" and the oxygen masks fell down. She described the sound as similar to a hand dryer in a public bathroom "but ten times louder." She felt a pull to her left and looked over and saw the hole. She was holding a small plushie in her hand and was able to hold onto it. They both struggled to find the elastic straps to secure the masks to their faces. Passenger 26F stated she thought that the "metal chain" was part of the strap and could not figure it out. They had to dig their fingers into the mask to find the strap because it was so flat against the plastic. Once they got them on correctly, they both tightened them as much as possible but stated that the masks were "flimsy" and would suck in against their face when they breathed in and would fall off when they breathed out. She knew the instructions (that the bag would not inflate) but it concerned her when it did not because she thought there was no air moving. They had to keep one hand on the mask the whole time because of how hard they were breathing. There was no sound and she could not hear anything. She did not hear any announcements. All they did was stare out the hole and they did not know whether they were turning around or continuing to Ontario. They both saw the passengers in 25ABC move to a different location toward the front of the airplane. She estimated that it was about 5 minutes after the decompression before they moved. Seat 25A appeared like it was being sucked out of the hole. Her brother reported that he saw flight attendants from the back come forward and flight attendants from the forward part of the cabin come back. They motioned to each other and returned. She tried to think of the hole as a large picture window and tried to enjoy the view. They held hands and tightened their seat belts but were completely secure. They could barely hear each other even though they were actually screaming at each other. After landing, they both took their masks off. They deplaned and she got hugs from two flight attendants. Her brother took a photo of the hole after they landed but before the paramedics came on board. She recalled that passenger 26C lost all of his carry-on luggage but had a GoPro camera strapped to his wrist that he used during the flight. Neither of them was injured and she did not recall any ear pain during descent. She recalled little bits of

insulation in the air and landing on her brother's sweater. Her brother was able to send a text out to their mother while they were still in the air. Their mother called him and he answered but he could not hear her.

Interview: Female Passenger 19D

Date: January 10, 2024

Representative: Declined

She had recently moved to California with her husband in July 2023. She was planning to travel for Christmas with their 1-year-old son and 5-year-old and 3-year-old daughters and started looking into flights in August. She found a round trip ONT-PDX flight on alaskaair.com. They decided she would fly with the 3 children on December 21st and her husband would fly in the next day. He flew out New Year's Day while she flew on January 5th with the children. She booked online and had no problems. She paid for 3 tickets and had designated the one-year-old as a lap child.

She checked in the night before online and was not able to add a bag, but she did so at the airport. She stayed with a relative about an hour from PDX. They left at 1230 to head to the airport and arrived about 1515. She printed bag tag and checked it in and her relative came in to help. She had a stroller and carry-on bag and 3 children. They made it through security with no problems and were at the gate 15 minutes prior to boarding. She then checked her carry-on because they asked while she was checking the stroller. They boarded the airplane and she got everyone settled. Her 5-year-old daughter was in the window seat. Her 3-year-old daughter was in the middle seat. She sat in the aisle seat with her 1-year-old.

Her daughters were watching their tablets. Departure was supposed to be 1640 but they left late, about 1700. The airplane was deiced and she recalled that the pilot made an announcement telling the passengers that they had a few things to take care of. About 15-20 minutes after takeoff, the seat belt sign was still on and the airplane was climbing. They had their seat belts on and her daughters were eating snacks. She was encouraging her son to drink water because he had been sick and had a cough. She then heard a "really loud bang." She did not recall any other sounds or vibrations but stated that she was preoccupied with her son. She "felt the air in the cabin change." It was suddenly windy with a smokey engine smell. She did not know what was wrong. A couple of seconds later the oxygen masks dropped and she felt dizzy. It was hard to breathe and she felt something was wrong.

She grabbed one of the masks and put it on her 3-year-old daughter. They were not tangled and she had no difficulty with them. She was getting dizzy and remembered that the flight attendants had briefed for parents to put their masks on first. She put her mask on and the dizziness went away. She put a mask on her 5-year-old and told them to stay still and keep their masks on. They both had headphones on and the masks fit well. They did not slip off. They looked scared but seemed okay. Her son was a big 1-year-old - about the size of a 2-year-old. She pinned him down and got the mask on his face but he screamed and thrashed around. She did not use the elastic band for him, she just tried to keep the mask over his face. She stated that

her mask was loose and she forgot it could be tightened, so she held it over her nose and mouth.

A short time later two women came up the aisle. A flight attendant met them at her row and said for them to go back to their seats but the women said that they were next to a hole. The flight attendant replied they should come with her. Passenger 19D then noticed the hole in the fuselage a few rows behind her. She grabbed the seat belts for both of her daughters and tightened them both because they were looser than she wanted them to be. She also tightened her own seat belt.

She recalled an announcement from the flight crew that there was a hole and that they were going to do what they could. She "faintly" recalled an announcement about using the oxygen mask but did not remember any announcements from the flight attendants. A flight attendant came by with a mask and an oxygen bottle making sure everyone had their masks on. Things stayed that way for about 5 minutes while she tried to keep the mask on her 1-year-old. She was thinking that they were going to be okay but the plastic oxygen bags started "shrinking up," and she began to get worried. She tried to text her husband. She told her daughters that it would be ok, and to go back to watching their show. They were comfortable in their masks and listened and went back to watching. She did not feel the airplane was descending until it dipped under the clouds. It was pretty smooth. After that she felt she could breathe again and did not feel dizzy anymore. The airplane landed shortly after that and everyone clapped and looked okay. She did not know where they were until she looked at a map on her phone after landing. There was an announcement for them to stay in their seats. She reported that one person tried to get up and other passengers told him not to. Paramedics came on and checked on people. She took the mask off her son and he sat on her lap. Her daughter saw the hole and asked why the airplane was broken. They waited until the paramedics escorted a few people off and then they deplaned and she contacted her husband. He encouraged her to get on a later flight home. They eventually took another Alaska flight to John Wayne Airport in Orange County and he picked them up from there.

When asked about her experience flying with children, she stated that she had flown with the children before and her daughters had flown a lot. She was experienced traveling with lap children. She believed Alaska was the easiest website to add a lap child to her reservation because "once you add them to your profile you just check a box to add them again." She had already flown with her son in February and June 2023. When asked whether the website ever encouraged her to buy a seat for her lap children she said no and that she always held her children when they were under two. When asked if she ever considered buying a seat for them, she said "no." She explained that her husband had been in residency for numerous years and that was not possible. When asked about the cabin lighting, she stated that she thought the lights were dimmed for takeoff but that they were on when the masks dropped.

They may have dimmed again after that. She stated that she was not injured but had some ear pain and back soreness for a few days.