

Miami Air International
Jacksonville, Florida
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**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

ATTACHMENT 1

FLIGHT ATTENDANT INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

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Interview: Enrique Luis Quinones, Flight Attendant (F/A) 2R
Date: May 5, 2019
Location: Naval Air Station – Jacksonville (NAS-JAX)
Representative: Franz P. Decordova (AFA)
Present: Emily Gibson (NTSB), Peggy Hurlbert (FAA), Bruce Wallace (Boeing), Deborah Wernert (Miami Air International), Tashana Brown (AFA)

F/A 2R had been employed by Miami Air for about 7 months and his hire date was October 10, 2018. He was on the second day of a trip and had flown in the day before to rest. He reported for the trip on the day of the accident at 0730 at the hotel. The pilot briefed there was “expected weather” flying into and out of Jacksonville Naval Air Station (NIP).

After boarding he personally conducted the exit row briefings. He asked each passenger if they were willing and able to be seated in the exit row and asked that they read the safety card. He stated it was a “normal departure.” The crew briefed passengers by using the safety demonstration video. F/A 2L was working in the aft part of the cabin with him. There were at least 3 children on board, and all were seated in the aft. There were some child restraint systems brought onboard, but he was not certain if they were used; he remembered a baby as he had played with him. He recalled the passenger count was 135 plus 7 crewmembers. He did not have a manifest, which was given only to the purser.

As they got closer to NIP, there was some turbulence. The seatbelt sign was turned on and the pilot made an announcement to passengers and flight attendants to be seated. All the flight attendants were seated after completing the pre-landing compliance check. He remembered an arrival announcement and within a few seconds of the airplane touching down, he felt vibrations and “heavy aircraft movement” to the left and right. He also felt like he was “jumping up and down.” Then “everything went black” and the emergency lights came on. He did not know they were in the water until he released his seatbelt and stood up and realized he was standing in water. He did not know if they were in the ocean, a river, or a lake. He stated that “everything happened so fast” but he knew he needed to start the evacuation procedures.

F/A 2R blocked the aft exits because he said that was what was taught in training for water evacuations. He commanded passengers to “get your life vest, put them on.” He said everything was unplanned. He said he heard life vests inflate so the crew shouted commands to “do not inflate” and continuously told passengers to put on their life vests but not to inflate them. He tried to help passengers as they did not know how to put on the life vests or take them out of pocket under the seat. He helped passengers put on life vests as he moved toward the exits, he eventually assisted with taking out the rafts.

Passengers seemed to follow crew instructions and he thought everything seemed to go smoothly. By the time the evacuation had started, most passengers had found their life vests and he continued to help passengers who were struggling with their life vest.

They did not have any information about the water or if they were going to sink. Water had already begun to fill the aft area when he got out of his jumpseat.

Eventually, F/As 2R and 2L were both standing at the overwing window exits but for some reason they had switched sides. He was at the left-side window exit and F/A 2L was at the right-side window exit. There was no evacuation command over the public address (P/A) system but he heard

someone give the command to evacuate and he shouted to them to confirm. A passenger responded “yes, she said to evacuate.” They began to evacuate from overwing exits using rafts. He said there were two rafts in the overhead bin, one in the front and one in the ceiling compartment. Passengers had opened exits and some passengers were on the wing. He assisted with the raft and said it was hard to pull to inflate but was successful and then assisted F/A 2L who already had passengers out on the wing and rafts deployed. She had taken mothers with kids, then asked for the elderly, then everyone else. He thought maybe 90 people evacuated from that exit.

F/A 2R indicated he was one of the last people off the aircraft. He conducted a cabin check with the captain and a company mechanic and someone from fire/rescue then exited out of the overwing exit on right side into a fire/rescue boat. Passengers opened all 4 overwing exits and all the passengers evacuated through them. No one exited from a door.

The fire rescue boat took the crew and some passengers (he thought 4) to the pier and they used a ladder to climb up onto the pier. It was raining when passengers exited the raft onto the pier and there were people there to help them out of the rafts.

He said some passengers tried to get into the water to save pets that were in the cargo. He used his flashlight to get the passenger’s attention to get out of the water.

When asked about carry-on bags, he indicated that “almost half” of the passengers tried to take carry-on bags with them but when ordered to stop and leave them the passengers followed instructions.

Once passengers realized they were close to land, that calmed them.

He used his personal flashlight that he carried in his pocket when everything went black. He did not take any emergency equipment out of aircraft.

He used the raft line to attach the raft to the airplane.

He stated he always conducted a silent review and felt his jumpseat belts and harness kept him safe. He was “impressed” the evacuation was so organized and that no one “freaked out.” He credited that to fact that many of the passengers had military backgrounds. He also reiterated that passengers had trouble removing the life vest from under their seats. He helped at least more than 7 passengers with their life vest in getting them open and putting them on.

He remembered that a passenger had gotten up from his seat just before landing and F/A 2L told him to go back to his seat.

The crew took a bus to the hangar where the passengers were being kept.

He felt his training prepared him, specifically stated he would not have been able to do what he did without training.

Interview: Radmila Rusalic, Purser (1L)
Date: May 5, 2019
Location: Naval Air Station – Jacksonville (NAS-JAX)
Representative: Nattasha Glasper (AFA)
Present: Emily Gibson (NTSB), Peggy Hurlbert (FAA), Bruce Wallace (Boeing), Deborah Wernert (Miami Air International), Tashana Brown (AFA)

The Purser’s hire date with Miami Air was in April 2002 and her last recurrent was held in May 2018. She had flown a 3-day trip, followed by a 24 break before the start of the 3-day trip. (The accident occurred on day 2 of her second 3-day trip.) Her report time was 0730. There was a slight delay prior to the accident flight.

During her purser briefing, the flight attendants chose their positions, they received additional information about the trip, conducted a position check and reviewed of duty zones and emergency equipment. The weather and flight times were briefed by the captain.

The captain’s briefing was done in the van on way to the base. It was a standard briefing. He told them it might be “bumpy,” and they should prepare early (before arrival check) and then be seated. And it should be a quick turn in Guantanamo (NBW).

The purser remembered 2 infants onboard and a couple of small children (5 to 6 years of age). She thought they were in car restraint systems but unsure if they were used, they were brought onboard but could not confirm if they were used.

She indicated that the crew used a video safety demonstration passenger briefing prior to departure.

She recalled turbulence as they got closer to Jacksonville. The captain called via interphone to tell the crew to prep the cabin early. He did make an announcement to passengers and said he wanted flight attendants to take their seats. The turbulence was not out of ordinary in the front of the cabin, however, she stated the aft of the airplane may have felt more.

She could feel the wind on descent and then during touchdown. It was a smooth landing. She picked up the interphone and waited to make the landing PA until the tire noise had stopped.

The airplane “kept going, going, going” and then there was another movement that she could not describe. She recalled thinking a tire had gone flat or exploded but later realized that could have been impact.

The cabin lights went dark and there was no communication, but the emergency lights came on.

The captain walked out of cockpit and said to open doors and evacuate. It was pitch black.

The purser opened the entry door and the slide inflated but it then twisted. The captain looked out and said, “that’s water.” They could see rocks and were both surprised to see water. The purser could not detach the slide; she blocked the exit and went to open the 1R door. That slide inflated but immediately began to deflate. She thought it may have deflated from sharp rocks. She worked with the captain and a company mechanic who was in the cockpit for landing to launch one of the rafts that had been retrieved, but it also deflated. She thought the rocks may have ripped it too.

The captain fell into the water to try to get to the cargo door and that was when they both realized that the water was shallow, and he could stand in it.

It was so dark she could not see outside. The front and aft doors were unusable, so there was no other option but to use the overwing window exits. She retrieved the megaphone and began redirect passengers to overwing exits.

The first two rafts went to shore, they off loaded and sent it back and forth. The priority was to just get people out. Some able-bodied passengers and the crew left on the boat. She was unsure how far from shore they were, but the raft returned that was send away so they loaded more people in. At one point, one of the rafts started to deflate. She remembered trying to fill the rafts with children and elderly first. She remembered putting the mother and a baby in the raft.

She saw fuel in the water. A rescue boat arrived and went to the right side and water started come up more in the aft part of the plane She grabbed her flashlight and the megaphone again. She stated they were close to land with fire fighters, so she did not take much. She evacuated onto the boat.

When asked about cabin damage she stated there were debris in front of the cockpit door. Oxygen masks had fallen from the ceiling in the galley. She stated passengers had life vests on but some needed assistance. She put on a life vest.

She did not know how long the evacuation took. It felt very fast, but she stated she had a lot going through her mind.

She said two rafts were used but not certain of the number of trips. She tried to keep count of passenger flow. She said passengers helped with communication and would relay messages to the aft. She said the captain was in water assisting with rafts. She stated that the passenger responded so well and were amazing.

She felt her most valuable training was the "silent review". Also, being able to open doors over and over for years. She felt the additional purser training was helpful. She also sustained a bump on the head from contact with forward flight attendant panel that had separated from the wall.

She was frustrated by what she thought was a lack of first responder support. She indicated she could see people waiting on shore but not coming to help. She was aware of boats on the left side and how it again maneuvered to the right side. She said later she realized it was an issue with fuel in water.

Interview: Melissa Gonzalez, Flight Attendant (F/A) 2L
Date: May 5, 2019
Location: Naval Air Station – Jacksonville (NAS-JAX)
Representative: Gary Halbert (Attorney with Holland and Knight)
Present: Emily Gibson (NTSB), Peggy Hurlbert (FAA), Bruce Wallace (Boeing), Deborah Wernert (Miami Air International), Tashana Brown (AFA)

F/A 2L stated she worked the aft left position. Her hire date was November 28, 2016 and her last recurrent was in November of 2018. She was on day 2 of a 3-day trip. The trip started in NIP at 0730. They were delayed for 3 - 4 hours and the on ground at GTMO about 1 hour.

They were provided a briefing by the pilot on the morning van ride for this flight that included flight times, weather, and a delay.

She stated that boarding was normal and included children and a couple infants. She remembered one seated in a child restraint system.

On approach to Jacksonville she recalled the pilots made an announcement for passengers to be seated. She conducted a seatbelt compliance check and took her seat. One passenger had tried to go to bathroom prior to landing and she had yelled for him to get back to his seat.

She was in her jumpseat doing a silent review and thought it was a good landing but felt they were going fast. At one point she said she lost her breath and she remembered her legs were bouncing. She thought she “had died” but then looked over and saw the other flight attendant move and realized she was alive. As she tried to catch her breath and asked, “is everybody OK?”

She got out of her restraints to check on passengers and someone yelled “we are in water” and that was when she realized water was at her feet. She began her commands to “get your life vest and put it on- do not inflate.”

She grabbed a passenger life vest for herself and started to help passengers with their life vests because many were confused and asking how to use them. She got up on a passenger seat and yelled forward if they should evacuate. Passengers relayed a message, “yes.” She said she ran to an overwing exit and saw land. She asked an able-bodied person to help her with a raft.

Once she got the raft outside, she took charge to inflate it. She hooked it to aircraft and commanded passengers to take sharp objects off their person and she told passengers to load the raft. Once the raft was full, she unhooked the line and threw it to a firefighter in the water. She said she counted 60 passengers in the raft.

Someone had brought back a second raft to the overwing exit. The wind, rain, and thunder were making it difficult to maneuver. She stated someone jumped in the raft and may have punctured it as it began to hiss and seemed to deflate. Because of the damage she warned the passengers and told them to go before it deflated. She told passengers to hurry and paddle. Two men jumped into water and pushed the raft to shore. A rescue boat came and took about 6 remaining passengers.

Every crewmember did a walk through. She evacuated onto a rescue boat. Once on shore, she assisted with counting passengers as they boarded the bus for transport to hangar.

She remembered a training video about a slide deploying inside an airplane, so she inflated the raft. She inflated two rafts on the right side and sent both rafts off aft of the wing.

When asked about training, her response was “everything kicked in”. She never imagined she would act like she did. The galley stayed secure. They did not use the aft doors because of ditching training. She stated she had previously worked for two and a half years for World Atlantic.

Interview: Florentine Hoven, Flight Attendant (F/A) 1R
Date: May 5, 2019
Location: Naval Air Station – Jacksonville (NAS-JAX)
Representative: Gary Halbert (Attorney with Holland and Knight)
Present: Emily Gibson (NTSB), Peggy Hurlbert (FAA), Bruce Wallace (Boeing), Deborah Wernert (Miami Air International), Tashana Brown (AFA)

F/A 1R stated her length of service with the company was 7 months. Her hire date was October 2018. She no previous flight attendant experience.

This was the second day of a three-day trip. Her report time was 0730. She said there was a four hour delay due to the air conditioning. There were two briefings, one from the captain and one from the purser, and that they knew there was going to be turbulence. It was covered in the briefing. When asked if she noticed any children, she said there were car seats and infants. They were not sitting in or near the exit row. She stated the 2R position briefed the exit rows. The manifest showed the number of passengers was 136.

She stated the boarding process was “normal”. The video safety demonstration was used to brief passengers and she stated she conducted a preflight of all the emergency equipment including the rafts. This was done by checking for the presence and a sticker to ensure it was not expired.

She said that twenty minutes before “arrival check” the Captain made an announcement to discontinue the service and be seated. This include everyone, including the flight attendants. She said she saw lightning. The landing was fine, they did not feel a bounce, it was a very smooth landing, but then they drifted side to side. She felt two “crashes.” On the first one, it was very hard. One of the ovens flew out of the galley. On the second, more things flew out in the galley and the oxygen masks dropped in the galley area.

The airplane came to a stop and the passengers were in a panic trying to get their luggage. One man had a backpack and would not give it up because he said he had insulin. She told everyone to stay in their seats and remain calm. She heard the cockpit try to come out, so she moved the debris from in front of the cockpit door. She began to yell “grab your life vest, put it on.” Passengers struggled with life vests. They were confused. When they went to put it on the back panel confused people. Passengers were in shock.

She said 2 able bodied passengers brought the raft from the overhead compartment on the left side and she told them to take them to the window. The purser opened the left forward door and the slide inflated but it was not usable. She held passengers back while the right forward door was opened. The purser and the company mechanic who was seated in the cockpit brought the ceiling compartment raft to the right door and launched it.

She yelled to use the over wing exit and sent passengers to those exits. When she looked outside, she saw some people had gone to the pier and other people were walking by the stone wall. Another raft inflated and 4-6 people jumped in the and then there were bubbles. She told them to “go, go, go”, and they started to paddle.

After everyone was off the airplane and they conducted a passenger check. She said about 4 or 5 passengers tried to go back inside from the wing to retrieve their belongings. She said the panic dissolved when they told passengers to put on their life vest. She evacuated via a rescue boat. Once on land, she said that she saw mud and leaves on the runway and that she did not remember emergency lights at all. The interphones did not work.

She said she was unsure if the airplane would sink, but she acted as if it would and tried to move fast. She stated they assessed and controlled the passengers. When she got to the hangar she asked about the families and children. She saw one woman holding her baby and was told the children were all ok. Later, she saw some of them at the hospital.

When she was at the hangar a passenger walked up to her and thanked her because he got up prior to landing to use the rest room and she told him to go back to his seat.