



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Location: | Tacoma, Washington | Accident Number: | DCA22LA134 |
| Date & Time: | May 21, 2022, 20:00 Local | Registration: | N256WN |
| Aircraft: | Boeing 737-700 | Aircraft Damage: | None |
| Defining Event: | Cabin safety event | Injuries: | 1 Serious, 66 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 121: Air carrier - Scheduled | | |

Analysis

According to a flight attendant (FA) on Southwest Airlines flight 2046, during cruise flight with no reported turbulence, she and several passengers noticed the forward lavatory was occupied for an unusually long time (10-15 minutes) requiring passengers to use the back lavatory. The FA realized the passenger had unlocked the lavatory door and cracked it open but did not exit. She knocked on the door and asked if everything was okay but there was no response. When the FA attempted to open the door, a female passenger started to exit the lavatory when she began to fall and grabbed on to the FA. The FA immediately requested for the front two passengers to assist her in getting the passenger up and moved to a seat. While assisting the passenger, the FA noticed the passenger's foot was swollen and piece of bone was sticking through her skin. A volunteer medical professional who was onboard the airplane assisted and positioned the injured passenger in the front galley for landing. Emergency medical personnel met the airplane at the gate and transported the passenger to a local hospital.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

During cruise flight with no reported turbulence a passenger sustained a serious injury for an unknown reason.

Findings

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| Personnel issues | (general) - Passenger |
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Factual Information

History of Flight

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|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Enroute-descent | Cabin safety event (Defining event) |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|

Pilot Information

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|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Certificate: | Airline transport | Age: | 49 |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land; Multi-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Left |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | 5-point |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | |
| Medical Certification: | Class 1 Without waivers/limitations | Last FAA Medical Exam: | January 13, 2022 |
| Occupational Pilot: | Yes | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 13900 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8100 hours (Total, this make and model), 3960 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 135 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 60 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Co-pilot Information

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Certificate: | Airline transport | Age: | 46,Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land; Multi-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Right |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | 5-point |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | |
| Instructor Rating(s): | Airplane single-engine | Toxicology Performed: | |
| Medical Certification: | Class 1 | Last FAA Medical Exam: | December 1, 2021 |
| Occupational Pilot: | Yes | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 12011 hours (Total, all aircraft), 93 hours (Total, this make and model), 5145 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 93 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 93 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Boeing | Registration: | N256WN |
| Model/Series: | 737-700 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | 2006 | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Commuter | Serial Number: | 32514 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Retractable - Tricycle | Seats: | 151 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | May 15, 2022 Continuous airworthiness | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 155000 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 2 Turbo fan |
| Airframe Total Time: | 52645 Hrs as of last inspection | Engine Manufacturer: | CFM INTL |
| ELT: | Installed, not activated | Engine Model/Series: | CFM56-7B24 |
| Registered Owner: | SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO | Rated Power: | 24200 Lbs thrust |
| Operator: | SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | Flag carrier (121) |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|-----------------------|---|-------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | | Distance from Accident Site: | |
| Observation Time: | | Direction from Accident Site: | |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Few | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 10 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | None / None |
| Wind Direction: | 360° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | N/A / N/A |
| Altimeter Setting: | 3019 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 18°C / 6°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | Oakland, CA (KOAK) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | IFR |
| Destination: | Bellingham, WA (KBLI) | Type of Clearance: | IFR |
| Departure Time: | 18:30 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class A |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 5 None | Aircraft Damage: | None |
| Passenger Injuries: | 1 Serious, 61 None | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 Serious, 66 None | Latitude, Longitude: | 47.1857,-122.2737 |

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Hauf, Michael

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: July 20, 2022

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class 4](#)

Note: The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=105307>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).