



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	SAN ANTONIO, Texas	Incident Number:	DEN891A089
Date & Time:	March 21, 1989, 18:29 Local	Registration:	N728
Aircraft:	BOEING 727-200A	Aircraft Damage:	None
Defining Event:		Injuries:	133 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 121: Air carrier - Scheduled		

Analysis

AMERICAN AIRLINE FLT 1269 & MEXICANA AIRLINE FLT 731 WERE CRUISING AT FL 290 ON SOUTHERLY HEADINGS. AFTER DEVIATING AROUND WEATHER, FLT 1269 WAS ON A SOUTH-SOUTHEASTERLY HEADING. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE TWO BOEING 727 AIRCRAFT CONVERGED TO ABOUT 1.06 MI FROM EACH OTHER, VIOLATING THE MINIMUM HORIZONTAL SEPARATION REQUIREMENT. THE OPERATIONAL ERROR OCCURRED WHEN THE ARTCC CONTROLLER WAS BUSY WITH HEAVY TRAFFIC.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this incident to be: FAILURE OF THE ARTCC CONTROLLER TO ASSURE THAT THE AIRCRAFT MAINTAINED IFR SEPARATION STANDARDS. THE CONTROLLER'S HEAVY WORKLOAD WAS A RELATED FACTOR.

Findings

Occurrence #1: NEAR COLLISION BETWEEN AIRCRAFT
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) IFR SEPARATION STANDARDS - NOT MAINTAINED - ATC PERSONNEL(ARTCC)
2. (F) EXCESSIVE WORKLOAD (TASK OVERLOAD) - ATC PERSONNEL(ARTCC)

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	51, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 1, 1989
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	16000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 6000 hours (Total, this make and model), 180 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BOEING	Registration:	N728
Model/Series:	727-200A 727-200A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	134
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	142000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	3 Turbo fan
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	P&W
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	JT8D-9
Registered Owner:	AMERICAN AIRLINES	Rated Power:	14000 Lbs thrust
Operator:	AMERICAN AIRLINES	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Flag carrier (121)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	AALA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Unknown	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	HOU	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	DALLAS , TX (DFW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	(CUN)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	17:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

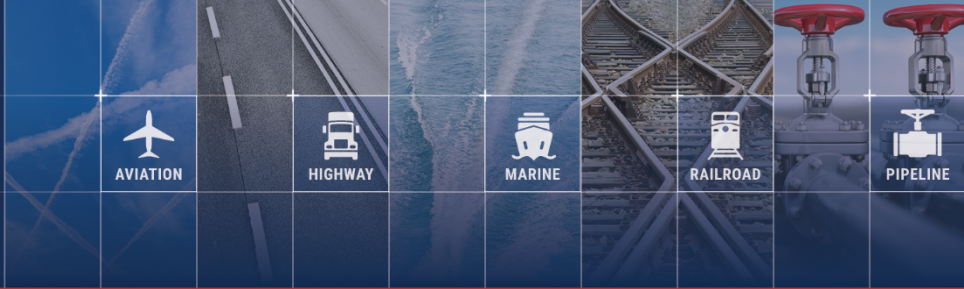
Crew Injuries:	7 None	Aircraft Damage:	None
Passenger Injuries:	126 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	133 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Wiemeyer, Norman
Additional Participating Persons:	RICHARD WENTWORTH; WASHINGTON , DC GREG SALOTTOLO; WASHINGTON , DC
Original Publish Date:	September 30, 1992
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=17617

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](#).



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	SAN ANTONIO, Texas	Incident Number:	DEN891A089
Date & Time:	March 21, 1989, 18:29 Local	Registration:	XAMXE
Aircraft:	BOEING 727-200	Aircraft Damage:	None
Defining Event:		Injuries:	128 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 129: Foreign		

Analysis

AMERICAN AIRLINE FLT 1269 & MEXICANA AIRLINE FLT 731 WERE CRUISING AT FL 290 ON SOUTHERLY HEADINGS. AFTER DEVIATING AROUND WEATHER, FLT 1269 WAS ON A SOUTH-SOUTHEASTERLY HEADING. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE TWO BOEING 727 AIRCRAFT CONVERGED TO ABOUT 1.06 MI FROM EACH OTHER, VIOLATING THE MINIMUM HORIZONTAL SEPARATION REQUIREMENT. THE OPERATIONAL ERROR OCCURRED WHEN THE ARTCC CONTROLLER WAS BUSY WITH HEAVY TRAFFIC.

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Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	32, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 16, 1988
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	6300 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5300 hours (Total, this make and model), 730 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 150 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BOEING	Registration:	XAMXE
Model/Series:	727-200 727-200	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	134
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	142000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	3 Turbo fan
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	P&W
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	JT8D-17R
Registered Owner:	MEXICANA AIRLINES	Rated Power:	17000 Lbs thrust
Operator:	MEXICANA AIRLINES	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Flag carrier (121)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	MXLA

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Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
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Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	DALLAS , TX (DFW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	(MTY)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

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Passenger Injuries:	121 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	128 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

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