
Turbulence injury, Boeing 737-3H4, June 25, 1999

Micro-summary: This Boeing 737-3H4 experienced turbulence during cruise, seriously injuring a flight attendant.


Event Date: 1999-06-25 at 1945 CDT


Investigative Body: National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), USA


Investigative Body's Web Site: <http://www.nts.gov/>

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		NTSB ID: FTW99LA207		Aircraft Registration Number: N650SW	
		Occurrence Date: 06/25/1999		Most Critical Injury: Serious	
		Occurrence Type: Accident		Investigated By: NTSB	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place LAFAYETTE	State LA	Zip Code 70509	Local Time 1945	Time Zone CDT	
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip		Distance From Landing Facility:		Direction From Airport:	
Aircraft Information Summary					
Aircraft Manufacturer Boeing		Model/Series 737-3H4		Type of Aircraft Airplane	
Sightseeing Flight: No			Air Medical Transport Flight: No		
Narrative					
<p>Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:</p> <p>On June 25, 1999, approximately 1945 central daylight time, a Boeing 737-3H4 transport category airplane, N650SW, operating as Southwest Airlines Flight 1257, was undamaged during an in-flight encounter with turbulence near Lafayette, Louisiana. A flight attendant working in the aft galley was seriously injured. The 137 passengers, 2 flight crewmembers, and 2 other flight attendants were not injured. The airplane was owned and operated by Southwest Airlines Co., of Dallas, Texas.</p> <p>Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed for the Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 121 flight for which an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan was filed. The scheduled domestic passenger flight was dispatched from the Houston Hobby Airport (HOU) at approximately 1918, with the New Orleans International Airport/Moisant Field (MSY) near New Orleans, Louisiana, as its intended destination.</p> <p>The captain, who was the non flying pilot, reported that while in cruise flight at FL330, approximately 125 miles west of MSY, he became aware of thunderstorm activity over MSY after receiving the current ATIS for MSY. The captain stated that he informed the first officer of the weather, and the first officer turned on the seat belt sign and made an announcement to the passengers that the flight was about to initiate a descent into MSY. He briefed the passengers about the possibility of encountering turbulence while in the vicinity of thunderstorms during the descent and approach phase of the flight.</p> <p>The captain further stated that several minutes later, the flight entered an area "of stratus-like clouds" with a small cell approximately 20 miles to the left of their flight path. The captain reported that the airplane experienced a "sudden jolt" which he described as "similar to crossing the wake of another 737 at 90 degrees." The jolt was followed by 10 to 12 seconds of light to occasional moderate turbulence. The turbulence ended when the airplane exited the clouds, and smooth air prevailed for the remainder of the flight.</p> <p>A flight attendant in the aft galley of the airplane reported that she was reaching inside one of the galley cabinets when the turbulence occurred. She reported that "the plane dropped, she went up in the air and when she came down, she landed on her ankle." The injured flight attendant called the captain on the intercom and reported her injury. The captain asked her to try to reach the jump seat and strap in, which she did. An uneventful landing was made at MSY.</p> <p>The flight attendant was transported to a local hospital. The injuries to the flight attendant were initially reported as minor. Three days after the occurrence, the NTSB learned that she had sustained "a broken distal fibula that was displaced."</p>					
FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION					
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 National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION		NTSB ID: FTW99LA207			
		Occurrence Date: 06/25/1999			
		Occurrence Type: Accident			
Landing Facility/Approach Information					
Airport Name	Airport ID:	Airport Elevation Ft. MSL	Runway Used 0	Runway Length	Runway Width
Runway Surface Type:					
Runway Surface Condition:					
Type Instrument Approach:					
VFR Approach/Landing:					
Aircraft Information					
Aircraft Manufacturer Boeing		Model/Series 737-3H4		Serial Number 27720	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Transport					
Landing Gear Type: Retractable - Tricycle					
Homebuilt Aircraft? No	Number of Seats: 145	Certified Max Gross Wt.	130000 LBS	Number of Engines: 2	
Engine Type: Turbo Jet	Engine Manufacturer: Cfm	Model/Series: CFM-56	Rated Power: 20000 LBS		
- Aircraft Inspection Information					
Type of Last Inspection Continuous Airworthiness	Date of Last Inspection 06/1999	Time Since Last Inspection Hours	Airframe Total Time Hours		
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information					
ELT Installed? No	ELT Operated?	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site?			
Owner/Operator Information					
Registered Aircraft Owner SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.		Street Address P.O. BOX 36611			
		City DALLAS	State TX	Zip Code 75235	
Operator of Aircraft Same as Reg'd Aircraft Owner		Street Address Same as Reg'd Aircraft Owner			
		City	State	Zip Code	
Operator Does Business As: SOUTHWEST AIRLINES			Operator Designator Code: SWAA		
- Type of U.S. Certificate(s) Held:					
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s): Flag Carrier/Domestic					
Operating Certificate:			Operator Certificate:		
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 121: Air Carrier					
Type of Flight Operation Conducted: Scheduled; Domestic; Passenger Only					
FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION					

 <p>National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION</p>	NTSB ID: FTW99LA207
	Occurrence Date: 06/25/1999
	Occurrence Type: Accident

First Pilot Information

Name On File	City On File	State On File	Date of Birth On File	Age 45
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Sex: M	Seat Occupied: Left	Principal Profession: Civilian Pilot	Certificate Number: On File
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Certificate(s): Airline Transport; Flight Instructor

Airplane Rating(s): Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land

Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA: None

Instrument Rating(s): Airplane

Instructor Rating(s): Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine

Type Rating/Endorsement for Accident/Incident Aircraft? Yes	Current Biennial Flight Review?
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Medical Cert.: Class 1	Medical Cert. Status: Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Date of Last Medical Exam: 01/1999
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- Flight Time Matrix	All A/C	This Make and Model	Airplane Single Engine	Airplane Multi-Engine	Night	Instrument		Rotorcraft	Glider	Lighter Than Air
						Actual	Simulated			
Total Time	14000	8000	1800	12200	3000	2000				
Pilot In Command(PIC)	9200	4000	1700	7500	1500	1000				
Instructor	1000		1000		100	50				
Last 90 Days	240	240		240	50	20				
Last 30 Days	95	95		95	10	5				
Last 24 Hours	6	6		6	1					

Seatbelt Used? Yes	Shoulder Harness Used? Yes	Toxicology Performed? No	Second Pilot? Yes
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Flight Plan/Itinerary

Type of Flight Plan Filed: IFR

Departure Point HOUSTON	State TX	Airport Identifier HOU	Departure Time 1918	Time Zone CDT
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Destination NEW ORLEANS	State LA	Airport Identifier MSY	
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Type of Clearance: IFR

Type of Airspace: Class A

Weather Information

Source of Briefing: Company

Method of Briefing:

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Weather Information					
WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
MSY	1942	CDT	7 Ft. MSL	125 NM	90 Deg. Mag.
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Unknown			0 Ft. AGL	Condition of Light: Day	
Lowest Ceiling: Overcast		800 Ft. AGL	Visibility: 2 SM	Altimeter: 29.00	"Hg
Temperature: 23 °C	Dew Point: 23 °C	Wind Direction: 70		Density Altitude: Ft.	
Wind Speed: 5	Gusts:	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Instrument Conditions			
Visibility (RVR): 0 Ft.	Visibility (RVV) 0 SM	Intensity of Precipitation: Moderate			
Restrictions to Visibility: Haze					
Type of Precipitation: Rain Showers					

Accident Information		
Aircraft Damage: None	Aircraft Fire: None	Aircraft Explosion: None

Classification: U.S. Registered/U.S. Soil					
- Injury Summary Matrix	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	TOTAL
First Pilot				1	1
Second Pilot				1	1
Student Pilot					
Flight Instructor					
Check Pilot					
Flight Engineer					
Cabin Attendants		1		2	3
Other Crew					
Passengers				137	137
- TOTAL ABOARD -		1		141	142
Other Ground	0	0	0		0
- GRAND TOTAL -	0	1	0	141	142

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National Transportation Safety Board

FACTUAL REPORT

AVIATION



NTSB ID: FTW99LA207

Occurrence Date: 06/25/1999

Occurrence Type: Accident

Administrative Information

Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)

HECTOR R. CASANOVA

Additional Persons Participating in This Accident/Incident Investigation:

BOB R GILLASPIE

FAA FSDO

BATON ROUGE, LA 70811