
Turbulence on descent, Airbus A320-231, September 16, 1999

Micro-summary: This Airbus A320-231 experienced turbulence while on descent, injuring several passengers.


Event Date: 1999-09-16 at 2147 PDT


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


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

Cautions:

1. Accident reports can be and sometimes are revised. Be sure to consult the investigative agency for the latest version before basing anything significant on content (e.g., thesis, research, etc).
 2. Readers are advised that each report is a glimpse of events at specific points in time. While broad themes permeate the causal events leading up to crashes, and we can learn from those, the specific regulatory and technological environments can and do change. ***Your company's flight operations manual is the final authority as to the safe operation of your aircraft!***
 3. Reports may or may not represent reality. Many many non-scientific factors go into an investigation, including the magnitude of the event, the experience of the investigator, the political climate, relationship with the regulatory authority, technological and recovery capabilities, etc. It is recommended that the reader review all reports analytically. Even a "bad" report can be a very useful launching point for learning.
 4. Contact us before reproducing or redistributing a report from this anthology. Individual countries have very differing views on copyright! We can advise you on the steps to follow.
-

		NTSB ID: LAX99LA323		Aircraft Registration Number: N628AW	
		Occurrence Date: 09/16/1999		Most Critical Injury: Serious	
		Occurrence Type: Accident		Investigated By: NTSB	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place BEATTY	State NV	Zip Code 89003	Local Time 2147	Time Zone PDT	
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip		Distance From Landing Facility:		Direction From Airport:	
Aircraft Information Summary					
Aircraft Manufacturer Airbus Industrie		Model/Series A-320-231		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 September 16, 1999, at 2147 hours Pacific daylight time, an America West flight 2569, an Airbus A320-231, N628AW, encountered turbulence while on descent over Beatty, Nevada. The aircraft was not damaged; however, three flight attendants and seven passengers received minor injuries, while one passenger received serious injuries. The aircraft was being operated as a scheduled domestic passenger flight by America West Airlines, Inc., under the provisions 14 CFR Part 121, when the accident occurred. The flight originated in Seattle, Washington, at 1955. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and an IFR flight plan was filed.</p> <p>The captain reported that he was at flight level (FL) 250 about 40 miles DME southeast of the Beatty VHF omni-directional radio range (VOR). He had been deviating around thunderstorms while using his airborne radar to identify severe cells. It was a dark night and he had been unable to make visual contact with the severe weather.</p> <p>The turbulence encounter lasted about 5 seconds with one large "bump" that was accompanied by about a 100-foot altitude gain in less than 2 seconds. After the event, flight attendants reported injuries to several passengers. The captain then contacted the company's Las Vegas flight operations and requested that emergency medical equipment meet the aircraft at the gate.</p> <p>The captain stated that he had turned on the seat belt sign 45 minutes before the accident due to "light chop" that he had encountered earlier in the flight. He made a public address (PA) announcement in which he told the passengers to return to their seats and to fasten their seat belts. About 20 minutes prior to the accident, he directed the flight attendants to suspend service and to secure the cabin. Finally, he made one last PA announcement advising passengers that there was an increased chance of turbulence during the remainder of their flight.</p> <p>According to statements from two of the flight attendants, one or more of the injured passengers were out of the seats when the turbulence was encountered.</p> <p>Emergency medical personnel met the aircraft at the gate, transporting six passengers to area hospitals. The three flight attendants were treated by paramedics at the scene and released. Although they were offered medical attention, two of the eight injured passengers refused medical treatment.</p>					
FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION					
					Page 1

 National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION		NTSB ID: LAX99LA323			
		Occurrence Date: 09/16/1999			
		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: None					
Aircraft Information					
Aircraft Manufacturer Airbus Industrie		Model/Series A-320-231		Serial Number 067	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Transport					
Landing Gear Type: Retractable - Tricycle					
Homebuilt Aircraft? No	Number of Seats: 156	Certified Max Gross Wt.	164569 LBS	Number of Engines: 2	
Engine Type: Turbo Fan	Engine Manufacturer: Int'l Aero En	Model/Series: V2500A1	Rated Power: 24800 LBS		
- Aircraft Inspection Information					
Type of Last Inspection Continuous Airworthiness	Date of Last Inspection 08/1999	Time Since Last Inspection 374 Hours	Airframe Total Time 31622 Hours		
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information					
ELT Installed?	ELT Operated?	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site?			
Owner/Operator Information					
Registered Aircraft Owner WILMINGTON TRUST COMPANY, TRUS		Street Address RODNEY SQUARE NORTH			
		City WILMINGTON	State DE	Zip Code 19898	
Operator of Aircraft AMERICA WEST AIRLINES, INC.		Street Address 4000 EAST SKY HARBOR BOULEVARD			
		City PHOENIX	State AZ	Zip Code 85034	
Operator Does Business As: AMERICA WEST AIRLINES, INC.			Operator Designator Code: AWXA		
- 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: LAX99LA323
	Occurrence Date: 09/16/1999
	Occurrence Type: Accident

First Pilot Information

Name On File	City On File	State On File	Date of Birth On File	Age 55
-----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------------	-----------

Sex: M	Seat Occupied: Left	Principal Profession: Civilian Pilot	Certificate Number: On File
--------	---------------------	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------

Certificate(s): Airline Transport; Commercial

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

Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA: None

Instrument Rating(s): Airplane

Instructor Rating(s): None

Type Rating/Endorsement for Accident/Incident Aircraft? Yes	Current Biennial Flight Review?
---	---------------------------------

Medical Cert.: Class 1	Medical Cert. Status: Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Date of Last Medical Exam: 05/1999
------------------------	--	------------------------------------

- 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	10259	253								
Pilot In Command(PIC)										
Instructor										
Last 90 Days	192	192								
Last 30 Days	65	65								
Last 24 Hours	5	5								

Seatbelt Used? Yes	Shoulder Harness Used? No	Toxicology Performed? No	Second Pilot? Yes
--------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Flight Plan/Itinerary

Type of Flight Plan Filed: IFR

Departure Point SEATTLE	State WA	Airport Identifier SEA	Departure Time 1955	Time Zone PDT
----------------------------	-------------	---------------------------	------------------------	------------------

Destination LAS VEGAS	State NV	Airport Identifier LAS	
--------------------------	-------------	---------------------------	--


Type of Clearance: IFR

Type of Airspace: Class A

Weather Information

Source of Briefing:
Company

Method of Briefing:

 <p>National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION</p>	NTSB ID: LAX99LA323
	Occurrence Date: 09/16/1999
	Occurrence Type: Accident

Weather Information					
WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
LAS	2056	PDT	2179 Ft. MSL	110 NM	120 Deg. Mag.
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Scattered			10000 Ft. AGL	Condition of Light: Night/Bright	
Lowest Ceiling: None		0 Ft. AGL		Visibility: 10 SM	Altimeter: 29.00 "Hg
Temperature: 26 °C	Dew Point: 11 °C	Wind Direction: 320		Density Altitude: Ft.	
Wind Speed: 7	Gusts:	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Conditions			
Visibility (RVR): 0 Ft.	Visibility (RVV) 0 SM	Intensity of Precipitation: Unknown			
Restrictions to Visibility: None					
Type of Precipitation: None					

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			3		3
Other Crew					
Passengers		1	7	126	134
- TOTAL ABOARD -		1	10	128	139
Other Ground	0	0	0		0
- GRAND TOTAL -	0	1	10	128	139

National Transportation Safety Board

FACTUAL REPORT

AVIATION



NTSB ID: LAX99LA323

Occurrence Date: 09/16/1999

Occurrence Type: Accident

Administrative Information

Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)

ROBERT R. CRISPIN

Additional Persons Participating in This Accident/Incident Investigation:

RONALD J ROSENHAHN
WP-PHX CMO
PHOENIX, AZ 85008