

Pilot Statement

FROM: CA Frank Tocci
E# 560635

DATE: December 1, 2015

RE: #825, BDA/PHL, 11/23/2015

This report is in reference to a severe turbulence encounter on Flight 825, BDA to PHL. We flew Flight 824 down from PHL earlier and were cognizant of the convective activity around the area. We previously flew down at FL 390 and only encountered continuous light with some moderate turbulence. We decided to hold west of the field and analyze the movement of the weather that was between us and the runway extending north to south for twenty miles. Other aircraft followed us into the hold. We saw a break in the line to the south of the field and flew until we could turn to the final approach fix and executed the RNAV 12 approach. We picked up the field at 1400 MSL and landed without incident. The weather worsened while at the gate, with heavy rain and strong winds.

I spoke with our dispatcher on a plan for departure. He suggested FL 280 for a better ride. At taxi out, we decided to hold short of the departure runway and wait for the storms to move through. After considerable improvement in the weather, we taxied on to the runway and made a radar sweep. The departure corridor looked excellent. We departed and climbed to FL 280. We requested a westerly deviation and were eight miles from our original track. We were well clear of any cells. I turned back on course after analyzing the radar. Out of nowhere, we hit an area of severe turbulence that lasted for 3-5 seconds. The autopilot remained engaged and altitude varied plus-or-minus 200 ft. I immediately made a PA for the FAs to take their seats. I was informed by our purser that she was thrown to the floor and the B FA was on the aft galley floor unable to get up. I told her to see if a doctor was on board to help. Fortunately, there was. I then reassured our customers that this was an isolated occurrence and to remain seated for the remainder of the flight. I transferred the flying duties to the FO, then conducted an HF phone patch with dispatch to discuss the event that transpired. After receiving the B FA's vitals and condition, it was decided to continue to PHL. The physician had our FA stabilized in the last row. She said it was most likely her ankle was broken. The flight continued and landed, where medical personnel met our aircraft and transported our B FA to the hospital. The A FA had a lot of back pain but stayed on the trip. Our C FA also had back pain and got off the trip the following day.