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Bill English
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National Transportation Safety Board

RE: Southwest Airlines Flight 31 Flight Attendant Statements

Bill,

Per your request, please find below the statement from the Flight Attendants involved in the aircraft accident at Nashville International Airport (KBNA) on December 15, 2015.

'A' Flight Attendant

On 12-15-15, I was flying in the "A" position on flight #31 from HOU to BNA. We had 133 PAX. After landing safely in BNA around 5:20 PM, I made my Arrival PA, remained in my jumpseat, strapped in, waiting to arrive at the gate. We continued to turn off the runway onto the taxiway and I heard a loud "bang" coming from either underneath the aircraft or from the flight deck.

It was hard to tell exactly where it was coming from. My first thought was that a tire had blown out or that we had hit something. Then, immediately following the loud bang there was a sudden hard jolt, and then a 2nd hard quick jolt. After hearing the loud bangs and feeling the 2 jolts, we came to a sudden stop and the aircraft was leaning to the right. Jan and I looked at each other and I commented that "this doesn't feel right and that something was wrong." She agreed. It seemed to become real quiet and dark on the aircraft. I waited to hear from the Pilots. After a few seconds, I tried to call the pilots on the interphone, but there was no power on the phone. Jan and I both unbuckled and I looked out the FWD entry door, but all I could see was the sky. Jan looked out the FWD service door and saw a grassy field. The FWD service door was slightly cracked, I guess due the jolts we felt. Jan and I looked at each other and we both said about the same time that something is wrong and we need to evacuate.

Jan started yelling "heads down, stay down", while attempting to open the FWD galley service door, while I attempted to make contact with the pilots again, while yelling the commands at the same time. At about that time, I believe the Emergency Lights came on. I hurried over to the FWD service galley door to help Jan and we quickly opened the door, the slide deployed, and it was a good usable exit. Jan and I immediately started yelling, "Come this way, this way out". It was at this time, that I noticed a bad burning-like smell coming from the flight deck. I knocked on the cockpit door and yelled in at the pilots. I stood in the FWD galley service area holding onto the assist handle yelling my commands and helping PAX slide down. There were a few PAX that I had to help sit down and slide. After a few seconds, the captain opened the flight deck door. I asked him if they were alright, and he said yes. I continued to evacuate the PAX. All PAX remained calm and very cooperative. Before I could say anything, I noticed that

some of the PAX did succeed in taking some bags with them down the slide. I remember one gentleman taking his hanging clothes bag with him, but most other PAX seemed to leave bags behind with no problems.

After all the PAX were off the aircraft, I grabbed the megaphone from the FWD right OHB and handed it to Jan and told her to go down the slide and try to get everyone together. I then grabbed the AED from the FWD right OHB, walked down the aisle toward the back of the aircraft a few rows to make sure that there were no PAX left on the plane, I saw Tabatha and we both confirmed that all PAX were off. I then went back to the front and slid down the slide. The aircraft was leaning down into a ditch, so Jan and I helped PAX get up onto the tarmac. It was at that time that Jan and I located Tabatha. We all tried to keep everyone together on the tarmac in a group and told them not to smoke. Emergency vehicles seemed to just keep arriving. PAX remained calm, but were worried about their personal belongings that were on the aircraft. They were informed by local officials that buses would be coming to transport them to the terminal and that they would be getting their personal items in a few hours, or that they could be mailed to them. So that we could get an accurate PAX count, I stayed with the buses and wrote down every PAX last name as they entered the buses. My count was 129, plus the 4 that were receiving medical attention due to minor injuries. I was then reconnected with my crew around 6 PM in Ops Office for paperwork and drug testing.

'B' Flight Attendant

After a safe landing in Nashville, we continued to taxi to the gate as we normally would for what seemed to be approximately one minute. JoJo, the "A" flight attendant, had already completed her arrival p.a. Being "B" I was strapped into the aft jumpseat expecting to arrive at the gate in a matter of seconds. All of the sudden the plane made an extremely hard, jarring stop. It threw my head/neck forward and then back against the jumpseat. Needless to say I was startled. I looked around at my surroundings. The only thing that came out of the back galley was the handheld. Everything else remained secure. All I could think was that something must've hit us or we hit something. As I stood up from my jumpseat I could feel that the plane was sloping downward. I looked out into the cabin but couldn't see much because it was dark and passengers were beginning to stand up at this point. I began to hear the "A" and "C" flight attendants yelling, "heads down, stay down, heads down, stay down" I knew it was time to evacuate.

I immediately turned on the emergency lights. I assessed the conditions out the aft entry door. I could see a grassy field and as I had suspected, we were close to the tarmac. I opened the door, the slide automatically deployed and it was a good, useable exit. I immediately started shouting my commands, "Come this way, this way out, leave everything, cross your arms, jump" as I moved toward the aft galley service door. All of the passengers were extremely calm and cooperative. After assessing conditions on the aft galley service door opened it and it was an even better exit having only about a 2 ft. drop from the plane. I moved into my dedicated assist space and began loudly shouting my commands. People favored the aft service door so I did have to direct them to the other door, but other than that everything was very smooth. I only had one lady try to take a huge roller bag down the slide. I yelled at her to leave everything. She was reluctant, but I finally grabbed the bag from her hands and threw it against the aft closet and told

her to go down the slide. After the last pax was off the plane I ran into the cabin yelling, "Is everyone off?" I got to approximately row 19 and I saw JoJo up front doing the same thing.

We communicated to each other that everyone was off and that we could leave. I went to the back and grabbed the megaphone, a flashlight and the first aid kit and went out the aft galley service door. I used the megaphone to tell people to stay together in a group and not to smoke. Police officers were already there to help us direct the passengers out of the grass and onto the tarmac out of harm's way. We all moved off to the side of the airplane, approximately 30 ft. away from the plane. Passengers were still calm and cooperative. Most were taking pictures of the plane and wanting to know when they would get their bags back. The paramedics arrived quickly and I believe we had 3 people needing medical assistance for very mild injuries.

While I was talking to the passengers and asking if anyone needed anything a passenger came up to me and pointed to the blue lights on the runway and told me that those lights were NOT on while we were taxiing! He said he was watching out his window the entire time and right before the accident occurred he was wondering how the pilots could see because it was so dark. He said that the blue lights didn't come on until after we had already evacuated the plane! All of us were extremely concerned about the pilots. They were still in the cockpit and hadn't evacuated yet. We could see movement as we looked up at them but it took them a very long time to come down. Jan and I were taken by golf carts to the station and JoJo rode on the buses with all the passengers.

'C' Flight Attendant

The Flight Attendants did their final walk through - All PAX were in seats with seat belts fastened, seat backs and tray tables were upright, carry-ons stowed. FAs were on jump seats with seat belts fastened, in brace position. The landing, at approximately 5:20pm, was normal. JoJo (FA-A) said her welcoming PA. Suddenly I sensed we were traveling on a bumpy surface. Almost immediately we slammed to a complete stop and there was a simultaneous loud pop that hurt my ears. I looked at the provisioning door and the door handle was at about the 10:30 position and the door was slightly ajar. The slide was still armed but not deployed.

Looking out into the cabin, it was dark but I noticed heads starting to bob as PAX began to get up. We began our "Heads Down - Stay Down" commands and continued as we waited for further instruction from the pilots. There was no communication from the pilots. The emergency lights came on. JoJo tried to reach the pilots on the interphone but no one answered. We both got up and looked outside our windows but it was totally dark. I pushed the door handle back to the locked position (with normal resistance) and heard a hissing sound as it locked. We quickly discussed evacuation then continued with our "Heads Down" commands while JoJo tried to reach the pilots by interphone again. She also knocked on the flight deck door but there was no answer. We decided to deploy the slide on FO's side (only) as the captain's side engine appeared to be on the ground. JoJo and I checked one more time for fire or obstruction and that the door was still armed (since it had been ajar) then opened the FO provisioning door and the slide deployed, still shouting our commands "Heads Down, Stay Down".

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We both smelled an odor a little like a burning odor, but saw no fire. Tabatha (FA -B) opened both aft doors and deployed both slides. We evacuated all PAX - many women had their small purses and some men had laptops and backpacks, ignoring our "Leave Everything" commands. But all in all, everyone was calm and orderly. Thankfully, we had no lap children or unaccompanied minors. We had one young traveler and one cat. All evacuated. No one appeared injured.

JoJo gave me some emergency equipment and instructed me to go down the slide after the last PAX exited and she would follow. I used the megaphone to get the passengers away from the aircraft and to keep them together- Tabatha exited an aft slide, using her megaphone to command. The three of us helped PAX up the grassy hill to the taxiway and shared the megaphones to try to keep everyone together and away from the aircraft. The PAX were very cooperative. Emergency vehicles began arriving- ambulances, fire trucks, police cars, and SWA ground personnel. With the help of a female police officer, we got the PAX onto the runway. It was still quite dark but there appeared to be a strong spotlight on our group from above.

One PAX that told me that she was on her way to Vanderbilt Hospital ICU to see her son for the last time. He was 39, a member of the Special Forces and was dying of cancer. I found SWA ground personnel who offered to personally take her to the terminal. I asked her name. The employee suggested I go with her to comfort her so he drove the two of us to the terminal. The employee said he would return with the other two FAs.

We all arrived at the terminal and met downstairs in the Ops offices. Someone from CISM went into the airport to buy us food and brought us water to drink. However, we were told not to eat anything until after the drug test. Unfortunately the drug test wasn't until four hours later. We continued to drink water, thinking the drug test was imminent. As time went on, we became quite miserable. My drug test started with a breathalyzer at 10:08 pm. We finally got to the hotel after midnight and after some confusion about the rooms and a food delivery that didn't arrive; we got to our rooms around 1am.

Thank you,

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