



December 17, 2024

Brice Banning
Investigator-In-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20594

NTSB Investigation DCA23LA109 – Envoy Flight 3408 DFW MGM 31 DEC 2022

Dear Mr. Banning:

The purpose of this letter is to provide views of Envoy Air, Inc. (Envoy) relative to the above-referenced matter. Envoy appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments for consideration by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in support of our shared commitment to aviation safety.

I. INTRODUCTION

On December 31, 2022, at approximately 1539 Eastern Standard Time (EST), Envoy flight 3408, an Embraer ERJ-170-200 LR (ERJ-175), registration N264NN, was involved in a ground accident while parked at the terminal gate with one engine running at Montgomery Regional Airport (MGM), Montgomery, Alabama. The 59 passengers and 4 crewmembers onboard were uninjured. One ramp personnel was fatally injured.

The flight was operating under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 121 as a regularly scheduled passenger flight from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (KDFW) to Montgomery Regional Airport, Alabama (KMGM).

Envoy is proud of the way the pilots and flight attendants handled this event.

II. ANALYSIS

A. Flightcrew

Both pilots were properly trained, qualified, and current for the flight on December 31, 2022, in N264NN.

The Captain had a total of 5,893 flight hours at the time of the event, including 325 hours in ERJ-175 aircraft. The Captain completed Initial Operational Experience (IOE) training on the ERJ aircraft, on February 07, 2022. The Captain had flown 145 hours in the past 90 days and 53 hours in the last 30 days. The First Officer had a total of 1,655 total flight hours at the time of the event, including 159 hours in the ERJ-175 aircraft. The First Officer completed Initial Operating Experience (IOE) training on September 10, 2022. The First Officer had flown 114 hours in the past 90 days and 62 hours in the past 30 days.

B. Aircraft N264NN

The aircraft was in an airworthy condition upon dispatch from KDFW, through the landing and taxi at KMGM.

A maintenance Periodic Service 1 Check (PS-1) was completed at Cincinnati (KCVG) on December 27, 2022. A regularly scheduled 2 Day check was conducted at Chicago (KORD) on December 30, 2022.

Three Minimum Equipment List (MEL) items were noted on the flight release: (1) MEL 33-01, First Officer's Dome Light inoperative; (2) MEL49-01, Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) inoperative; and (3) MEL 25-78, Door Flags require replacement.

No Configuration Deviation List (CDL) items were noted on the flight release or the Aircraft Maintenance Log (AML).

The aircraft's "red rotating beacons," which signal the ground crew that the aircraft engines are operating or going to start, were functioning during the event flight. The flight crew did not report any mechanical discrepancies during preflight activities or enroute during the flight.

C. Weather

The reported weather at the time of the accident noted winds from 230 degrees at 5 knots and no gusts. Visibility was reported at 10 statute miles. The temperature was 19 degrees Celsius. There was no precipitation, and the surface was dry.

D. APU Inoperative Procedures

The aircraft's APU was inoperative and added to the MEL per Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Envoy-approved procedures. Envoy has approved flight crew procedures for aircraft operations without an operative APU in the Quick

Reference Handbook (QRH) and Aircraft Operating Manual. All Envoy flight crews are trained in these procedures.

Envoy's Shutdown Checklist does not call for the red beacons to be selected OFF until both engines have been shut down.

The Station (KMGM) was aware that the aircraft had an inoperative APU. Both the outbound Captain and First Officer statements indicated the outbound Captain advised the gate agent that the aircraft had an inoperative APU and would require an external air start. The Captain also briefed one of the KMGM ground crews on the inoperative APU and the need for an external air start prior to the aircraft arriving at the gate.

E. Ground Operations Procedures

All American Airlines regional aircraft operators, which includes Envoy and Piedmont Airlines, Inc., conduct ground operations in accordance with the American Eagle Ground Operations Manual (EGOM). EGOM was developed through a cooperative partnership with the FAA and the American Eagle regional carriers.

The EGOM provides procedures to ground personnel in conducting American Eagle operations. The EGOM defines beacon lights as "Red strobe lights on the top and bottom of the aircraft fuselage which can rotate or flash." The beacon light signifies when the aircraft is moving and/or engines are running or may be an indication the engine(s) are about to start.

The EGOM in Chapter 2 (Ramp Safety) states: "2.1 To Keep Employees Alive and Aircraft Intact, You WILL: Item C. Never approach an aircraft to position ground equipment next to an aircraft or open cargo bin doors until the engines are shut down and the rotating beacon(s) turned off, except when conducting an approved single engine turn."

Additionally, the EGOM provides aircraft receipt procedures in Chapter 4, including a red warning which states: "NEVER POSITION GROUND EQUIPMENT NEXT TO AN AIRCRAFT OR OPEN CARGO BIN DOOR UNTIL THE ENGINES ARE SHUT DOWN AND THE ROTATING BEACON(S) TURNED OFF, EXCEPT WHEN CONDUCTING AN APPROVED SINGLE ENGINE TURN."

The EGOM defines the ground operations for each specific type of regional airliner. The Embraer 170/175 aircraft-specific procedures are defined in Chapter 10 of the EGOM. Chapter 10.1 defines the Hazard Areas of the aircraft including the engine inlet ingestion and engine jet blast area.

III. SUMMARY

- The flight crew was qualified and current in the ERJ-175 aircraft on December 31, 2022.
- The aircraft was in an airworthy condition from the time of dispatch through the arrival on the ramp.
- The operation of the aircraft with an inoperative APU was appropriate and within FAA and Envoy-approved limitations and procedures.
- The flight crew identified no additional aircraft system or component malfunctions during the flight.
- The aircraft was dispatched and operated within the FAA and Envoy limitations.
- Envoy has approved procedures for operations with an inoperative APU, which were followed in the subject event.
- The rotating red top and bottom beacons (strobes) functioned during the flight and were in operation when the aircraft approached the gate and when the event occurred.
- A ground employee improperly approached the aircraft and entered the engine hazard area when the aircraft beacons were on and operating.
- There was nothing that Envoy nor the flight crew could have done to prevent this event.

Envoy greatly appreciates the opportunity to offer its views and looks forward to being of assistance to the NTSB.

Respectfully submitted,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature. There are faint blue ink marks around the box, possibly from a pen or stylus.

Captain Scott Trepinski, Ph.D., FRAeS
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