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August 13, 2024

Sathya Silva
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

RE: Southwest Airlines Flight 3633 Crew Statements

Sathya,

Per your request, please find below the statements from the crew involved in the aircraft accident due to a Passenger sustaining a serious injury on August 7, 2024.

Captain

Descending through FL190 we were advised by the flight attendants of a passenger that had a compound fracture of her ankle. The passenger was an 85-year-old female prior to the start of the descent. The fasten seatbelt sign was turned on, which was several minutes before the incident. The flight attendant had repeatedly told the passenger the seatbelt sign was on, and they needed to return to their seat, the passenger stated that she wanted to remain in the galley to stretch her legs and was standing on one leg as we descended through a cloud and encountered moderate turbulence. At that point in time the passenger lost her balance and broke her ankle.

We called Stat MD and Dispatch on AIRINC but was unable to maintain communications. We declared an emergency and proceeded directly to Baltimore. We called Baltimore operations, had them relay message on the status of the passenger to Dispatch and had them notify EMS that they needed to meet us at the gate, there had been no reports of turbulence, and we had no indication of anything on radar in the area. I would consider the turbulence as moderate and short duration. Upon landing in Baltimore, EMS met the aircraft and treated and removed the passenger. The flight attendants had used 2 first aid kits and the EMK. Maintenance was called to replace these, and a logbook entry was made in accordance with this.

First Officer

Flight Attendants reported 85-year-old female passenger broke her ankle during turbulence when seatbelt sign was illuminated. Flight Attendant remarked that she had instructed the passenger to be seated at two separate occasions. The passenger acknowledged it and told the Flight Attendant she wanted to stretch her legs. Passenger was standing on one leg stretching when the aircraft encountered turbulence that was unexpected and unreported in the descent as it went through a cloud.

'A' Flight Attendant

After service I heard the 'C' Flight Attendant make a PA that the seatbelt sign was on from the rear of the aircraft. Shortly after, I heard her ask for medical personnel. I picked up the phone to hear the 'C' Flight Attendant tell the captain that a passenger's ankle was broken, and the bone was showing. I went to the first medical personnel who rang their call light, told them the situation, and walked them to the back of the aircraft. It was already getting crowded, so I came back to the front of the aircraft to monitor the area and help as needed. The injured passenger's two daughters happened to be seated in the front of the aircraft. They advised me that they think it was their mom who was injured. Since it was crowded, we decided it was best for them to stay at their seats. They provided me the age of their mother so we could relay the information to dispatched medical personnel. I continued to remain up front to monitor the area and keep the family updated with all new information provided. Since the passenger could not be moved from the rear galley when landing, a deadheading flight attendant sat on the jump seat with the 'B' Flight Attendant to make sure the passenger was safe when landing. EMS met the aircraft at the gate. The passenger and her family deplaned first.

'B' Flight Attendant

At cruise, lady came to back of aircraft. Fasten Seat Belt sign was on. I told her to please take her seat because sign was on. She said she needed to stretch. Within seconds we hit severe turbulence and she fell in back galley. Bone was poking out of her foot (lower leg). I stayed with her and kept her calm while the 'C' Flight Attendant called for assistance. The 'A' Flight Attendant notified Captain and monitored clear zone. The 'C' Flight Attendant went to get equipment. 3 nurses came immediately to help. We opened the first aid kit. The nurses bandaged it and we made a splint. Captain called Med Stat, but they could not hear each other. Nurses checked blood pressure and pulse. All normal. Lady was calm and talking with me. Nurses said she could not be moved. She landed in the back on floor. I was on jumpseat aft entry with her legs elevated on jump seat like nurses said to do. No blood. The deadheading flight attendant came back to help and landed on floor with her. We both held her legs to secure her. Nice landing. Lady said pain level was only a 2 now that wrapped and elevated. I made final decent PA and asked everyone to stay seated on landing to allow paramedics on board. I could not move off jumpseat so I had to ask deadhead flight attendant to help secure galley. Paramedics came and moved her into an aisle chair and took her off plane.

'C' Flight Attendant

I was sitting on the jump seat in the aft galley. The passenger came to the back to stand. The 'B' Flight Attendant told her to go back to her seat because it wasn't safe. The passenger said no because she needed to walk. I made the fasten seatbelt PA. As soon as I finished the PA, we experienced severe turbulence. The passenger fell back, hit her head and broke her ankle severely. I noticed her bone sticking out of her leg and immediately called the pilots to inform them. I made a PA for medical personnel to come to the back of the aircraft. Two nurses came to assist the passenger who was lying on the floor in the aft galley. I opened both first aid kits and the EMK to assist the nurses with what they needed. I also spoke to the passenger's daughter who was sitting in the front of the aircraft about her mother's condition. The nurses put a splint on the leg to secure it. During final decent, the nurses sat down. The passenger landed on the floor with a deadhead Flight Attendant. EMS met the plane at the gate. She exited in a wheelchair.

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Deadheading Flight Attendant

I was deadheading. Seatbelt sign was on. Passenger was walking back to aft bathroom. 'C' Flight Attendant made announcement stating seatbelt sign was on. Aircraft experienced turbulence. Passenger fell and injured her leg. Flight Attendant asked for medical personnel. Multiple passengers arrived to help. I left my seat to assist. I helped secure cabin. I was asked to help secure passengers for landing. I told medical personnel to use the end of the hokey for split. Once she was medically sound, I asked passenger in row 24 to move to other seats for the medical personnel. Landing was imminent. Due to her injury and recommendation from medical personnel, the injured pax must have her leg elevated. It was a full flight and no time to reseat passengers. I sat on the aft galley floor to secure injured passenger during landing. Once we arrived at gate, EMTs met the aircraft and assisted passenger.

Thank you,

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