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7/8/2025
Lorenda Ward
National Transportation Safety Board

RE: Southwest Airlines Flight 311 Flight Crew Statements

Lorenda,

Per your request, please find below the statements from the Flight Crew.

Captain

This was the first leg and day one of a three-day pairing, and my first time flying with the First Officer. During our pre-flight, I briefed all Flight Attendants on the details of the flight after having reviewed SkyPath and WSI PilotBrief on my EFB. Prior to this briefing I determined it was best to have the Flight Attendants remain seated until level off due to cumulous buildups in the Dallas area and the potential for turbulence. The Flight Attendants agreed to stay seated and wait for my call prior to getting out of their jumpseats. When I briefed the First Officer during our pre-flight briefing in the flightdeck, I informed him that I had asked the Flight Attendants to stay seated until we leveled off at cruise and agreed it was safe for them to get up. For this flight I would be pilot flying and the First Officer would be pilot monitoring.

During climb out to cruise we did experience occasional light chop, but nothing worse. Upon level off at FL370 the ride was smooth, at which time we notified the Flight Attendants they could perform their assigned duties. Shortly afterwards, the First Officer made a PA after turning off the seat belt sign and the remainder of the cruise was smooth and uneventful.

On descent into Panama City FL, we encountered clear air turbulence passing FL290 for a period of what felt like 10-15 seconds. Prior to this event, the First Officer had informed the passengers at approximately FL340 that the seat belt sign was on and informed passengers to be in their seats with their seat belt fastened as we began our final descent. I as Captain, then pushed the Flight Attendant Call Button one time at approximately FL330, informing the cabin crew to clean up and secure the cabin. I did this as a precaution since there were cumulous clouds scattered approximately 20,000 FT and below on our current course. One of the Flight Attendants called up on the intercom shortly after to confirm I intended to have them clean up and secure the cabin early, to which I replied yes. SkyPath and WSI Pilotbrief turbulence information was reviewed and there were no reported plots on our flight path. Additionally, ATC did not mention any adverse ride reports when issuing us our descent clearance.

As stated earlier, at approximately FL290 we encountered severe turbulence while penetrating what appeared to be a thin hazy cloud layer through which I could see the ground. The aircraft shook violently, exceeded maximum speed during the event and kicked off the autopilot. There were several Flight Attendants and Passengers that received injuries as a result. We confirmed this through intercom communications immediately following the event. We notified ATC of the severe turbulence and that we had potential injuries on board. We also informed Dispatch via ACARS after notifying ATC. Next, we coordinated with ECP Station Ops for EMS to meet us at the gate in ECP. The remainder of the descent and landing was smooth and uneventful with some very minor deviations for building cells.

After landing, I asked the First Officer to make an announcement reminding passengers to remain seated once parked at the gate so EMS could assist those injured first. EMS was awaiting our arrival in the jetbridge as we parked at gate 3. After completing the Parking Checklist, I met with EMS in the jetbridge to assist and assess the extent of injuries reported. Once all passengers were safely off the aircraft I contacted Dispatch, notified the Chief Pilot on-call in the NOC, made appropriate logbook entries with Maintenance Control, and I followed up with my crewmembers to see that all were okay. My First Officer and I eventually left the aircraft with contract maintenance and debriefed the event in our station ops office.

First Officer

DAL-ECP was the first leg of a 3-day pairing with my Captain, we had never flown with each other prior. As I was exiting the aircraft to perform the preflight walkaround, I overheard the Captain briefing the Flight Attendants and quickly said hello to the crew. Later, as the Captain and I were conducting our preflight briefings in accordance with our AOM, the Captain reminded me that he requested that the Flight Attendants remain seated for departure for some outlying cumulous buildups in the Dallas area. For their safety we discussed that we would call and notify them when it was safe to begin service.

The departure and climb out were normal. Once we leveled off at our cruise altitude of FL370, with my concurrence, the Captain notified the Flight Attendants that we anticipated a smooth ride and to begin their inflight service. A few moments later we turned the seat belt sign off and I made a PA informing the passengers it was safe to move about the cabin.

Prior to top of descent, we reviewed and briefed RWY 16 into KECP after reviewing SkyPath and WSI Pilotbrief on our iPads. SkyPath did not display any turbulence plots, while the WSI Pilotbrief app indicated, as we anticipated for this time of year, some isolated low level buildups in the terminal area. After completing our briefing and checklists for KECP, I made a PA informing the passengers that the fasten seatbelt sign was on for the remainder of the flight and provided the local weather and gate information. Shortly thereafter, the Captain single chimed to Flight Attendants early indicating it was time to secure the cabin early.

Descending through approximately FL290 we experienced severe turbulence. We were descending through a hazy cloud layer when the Autopilot disengaged and we experienced abrupt violent shaking, and an airspeed of approximately Mach .815. The turbulence lasted approximately 10 seconds as we continued our descent. The turbulence ended and we were able to level off at the assigned intermediate level-off altitude of FL270 per ATC. We checked on our crew and passengers, informed Dispatch and ATC of the severe turbulence and possible injuries as we continued our descent into KECP.

The remainder of the arrival was smooth with some minor deviations around isolated cells that were building. As we proceeded to KECP and confirmed injuries onboard, we coordinated for EMTs and Customer Service Supervisors to meet us at the gate. After landing, as we taxied to the gate, the Captain and I discussed leaving the seatbelt sign on once parked at the gate to ensure EMT's could assist those injured first. I then made a quick announcement requesting that all passengers remain seated once parked at the gate to ensure EMT's could attend to the injured in a timely manner.

While the Captain was in the jet bridge assisting with the injured, I walked through the cabin to thank the remaining passengers and access for any damage. Once all passengers and crew were deplaned, I conducted a postflight walkaround, and did not note any damage. When I returned to the flightdeck the Captain was on the

phone with Dispatch and making appropriate entries in the aircraft logbook. Contract maintenance met us at the aircraft shortly thereafter and we proceeded to Operations.

Flight Attendant Position "A"

On June 18, 2025 I was working flight 311 DAL to ECP. Captain briefed us about the flight and there was no initial indication that we were going to go through significant turbulence, but Captain advised us that if we didn't feel safe to take our seats and to communicate with the cockpit. Initially there was light chops in the forward cabin so flight crew in the AFT remained seated until they felt comfortable to conduct cabin service. Shortly after service concluded the flight was smooth and the seat belt sign was still luminated. I was cleaning up the FWD galley and FA-C was having a conversation with passengers in the front row. Then without warning a violent jerk of turbulence shook the cabin, I immediately grabbed on the upper handle of the FWD Service door. Then another episode of turbulence shook the cabin followed by a bigger more violent shake. I was momentarily airborne and was slammed into the angled ceiling, my right shoulder to the side of my head contacted the ceiling. As I collected myself FA-C proceeded to the AFT to check on Flight Attendant in the AFT Galley. As he was conducting his wellness check I walked down the aisle to check on passengers, several passengers expressed concern as well as reported injury. As I made my way to the very back FA-C and I, along with a nonrevenue employee secured Flight attendants in passenger seats while other took their respective jump seats. FA-C communicated with Pilots that EMTs and management would be required to meet us at the gate.

Upon landing we were met with support and EMTs removed and conducted first aid to those that required medical attention. All crew members were also evaluated and those that required extra medical attention were transported to hospital for further evaluation. Coordinated with base leadership for transportation accommodations.

Flight Attendant Position "B"

Severe turbulence while cleaning galley during final decent. I was in the aft and I was lifted to the ceiling, then thrown to the floor, then thrown into the galley door, then thrown into the closed jumpseat.

Flight Attendant Position "C"

On flight 311 DAL-ECP on 18 June 25, the flight attendants were instructed to secure the cabin early in case turbulence was encountered on final approach. As the flight attendants were finishing up the cleaning/securing process, the aircraft encountered severe turbulence for about 15 seconds; several people- passengers and crew- were thrown against the ceiling. To the best of my knowledge, 9 passengers and 3 crew were transported to the hospital for evaluation. After the turbulence subsided, I went from the front to the back of the plane to check on the individuals on the ground- a passenger and her child, and most of the rear flight crew B- Eudora, D- Harold, OE- Raven, and OEO- Karen. Harold, Raven, and Karen were transported to the hospital for evaluation. A- Manny, B- Eudora, and myself did not get transported, but did get evaluated by EMS on-site. We all do have minor injuries that can be evaluated at a later time after an I3R is completed.

Flight Attendant Position "D"

On the above date and time (05/18/25), while concluding service activities we received notification chime for final descent. Therefore, we began preparations to collect and secure the cabin. An extreme turbulent event occurred causing myself and co-hearts to be thrown and thrashed in the aft galley. I witnessed all co-hearts in the aft galley thrown around violently and particularly Karen (OE Trainer) to be thrown into the ceiling. And as I was being thrown around violently, I remember grabbing and holding Raven (trainee) as we likely landed on the galley floor in an effort to protect her.

Then, after the event subsided, we got into our jump seats immediately and began to secure items in the galley. Lastly, we examined one another for injuries and began to administer first aid. The event caused several injuries

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and came unexpectedly. Myself, fellow crew members, and several passengers were transported to local hospitals for treatment of various injuries.

Flight Attendant Position "OE Candidate"

Severe unexpected turbulence occurred while in the aft galley. Myself, my OE Evaluator and the B & D flight attendants were standing and slammed to the floor, picked up in midair and slammed to the floor again. I landed on my rear end, hit my head and am having headaches, neck and back pain. Drink cans and other loose items were violently flew around and burst.

Flight Attendant Position "OE Evaluator"

Unexpected turbulence hit while I was standing in the back galley causing me to fly upwards striking my head on the ceiling of the aircraft breaking the exit sign. I then fell sideways onto the jump seat that had been lowered by the B sitting in it while my head impacted the handle of the aft door, ultimately landing on my hands and knees on top of some soda cans that had exploded. The C also hit her head and fell backwards and was injured. The D tried to catch her and ended up hurting his knee and forearm. When we landed, myself, the C and the D were taken to a local hospital. The C is a candidate and was on her OE trip.

End of Statements

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