

Lawyers: Crash of 1411 will not effect trial

Delta expects no problems with litigation against the U.S. government

FORT WORTH (AP) — The crash of Delta Flight 1411 at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport should have no effect on lengthy litigation stemming from a Delta crash three years ago that killed 137 people at the same airport, said lawyers for both sides in the Fort Worth federal court trial.

But a Dallas lawyer who will be involved in a second trial stemming from the 1985 crash of Delta Flight 191 said following Wednesday's crash it is too soon to tell what effect it will have on the litigation. Flight 1411 crashed Wednesday on take-

off for Salt Lake City, killing 13 passengers. Delta officials said 95 people survived the flames and heavy smoke that engulfed the Boeing 727 after it plowed into a field at the end of a runway and cracked open.

Flight 191, a Lockheed L-1011 jumbo jet, crashed Aug. 2, 1985, in a thunderstorm as it attempted to land at DFW.

Delta is suing the U.S. government, claiming government air traffic controllers and weather forecasters were negligent in failing to warn Flight 191 of the possibility of severe turbulence in its landing path.

The non-jury trial between Delta and the government started March 1 in U.S. District Judge David O. Belew Jr.'s court and is expected to last through the end of the year. The trial is in recess until Oct. 3.

"While we don't comment on pending litigation, we don't see any impact of (Flight 1411's) crash on the pending trial," Amy Brown of the U.S. Justice Department in Washington said.

"That's our assessment of it," Brown, who declined to comment further, said. John Martin of Dallas, who represents

Delta in the trial, answered no when asked if Wednesday's crash of Flight 1141 would affect his case.

"The opposite question would be, 'Why should it?' Martin said. 'I don't see any reason why it should.'"

But attorney Windle Turley of Dallas said the ultimate effect of Wednesday's crash on the Flight 191 trial will depend on what investigators learn about its cause.

Turley will be the lead attorney for the families of about 25 victims of the Flight 191 crash who are seeking punitive damages against Delta. That trial will be held in

Belew's court after Delta's case against the federal government is completed.

Turley said that if any information is developed in the investigation of Flight 1141 about poor "cockpit resource management," or how a cockpit crew works as a team to respond to an emergency, such information might be used by the government in its defense in the Flight 191 trial or by the passenger plaintiffs in their case.

"If one of the causes of the crash was poor cockpit resource management, if I were Delta, I would be scared to death," Turley said.

Mexican congress meets president with sound of catcalls

MEXICO CITY (AP) — President Miguel de la Madrid said Thursday his economic and political reforms prepared Mexico for the 21st century, but opposition congressmen interrupted his final report to the nation with chants of "Fraud!"

The catcalls during the three-hour address and demonstrations by delegates alleging fraud in July's election were unprecedented in the history of the the congress.

De la Madrid reviewed a six-year administration that inherited massive economic problems and a politi-

cal system badly in need of reform. He said his period of sacrifice and reform hurt Mexicans but prepared a solid base for the future.

He spoke to a congress no Mexican president has faced in the 60 years the Institutional Revolutionary Party has held power — a legislature in which the opposition now has nearly half the seats. Even so, the opposition contends the party maintained its grip only through massive cheating.

When de la Madrid said the July elections were "historic," he was in-

terrupted for at least five minutes by opposition delegates chanting, "Fraud! Fraud!" Many delegates held up the remains of what they said were partly burned and invalidated ballots.

Deputies of the governing party tried to shout down the opposition, clapping and chanting "Mexico! Mexico!" until the chamber's chairman urged them to let the president continue.

De la Madrid also was interrupted when he spoke of his economic policy, which reduced government con-

trol of the economy, encouraged domestic and foreign investment and sharply reduced inflation.

Mexicans paid the price with a drastic reduction in buying power and lifestyle as petroleum prices and the Mexican currency collapsed.

The president said the austerity was needed because "we had to face and accept the fact that we would have to live within our means."

"The crisis we have lived through shook the very foundations of our social structure," de la Madrid said. "It was as though we had run the

rapids in the current of history. It was rough, but we also made considerable progress."

The new congress was the result of the political reforms sponsored by de la Madrid, and he lashed out at opposition parties that have criticized the electoral process and accused his administration of abetting electoral fraud.

"(Political) pluralism is a vital sign of democracy, and should never be a symptom of a divided or splintered nation," he said.

Negotiations between the Institu-

tional Revolutionary Party and the opposition made it possible only two days ago to install the new congress in time for de la Madrid's sixth and final state of the nation message. The party holds 260 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, to 139 for the leftist Democratic Front and 101 for the rightist National Action Party.

The governing party's stranglehold on power has been so strong that until this year no opposition candidate was elected to the senate. Now four of 64 senators belong to the leftist opposition.

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