

Stop, drop and roll



Shilo Owens, a sophomore community health major, loads a dummy into the Rollover Crash Convincer to demonstrate the dangers of drinking and driving, not wearing a seatbelt and driving with the windows down. Picture inset: the Rollover Crash Convincer in action.

Plane drives past runway, into fence, misses gas station

BURBANK, Calif. (AP) — A Southwest Airlines jetliner landing with 142 people aboard barreled off the end of a runway, slammed through a fence and struck a passing car before screeching to a halt about 50 feet from a gas station.

The cause of the accident was not known, officials said Monday.

Up to 15 people on the plane sustained minor injuries in Sunday night's accident at Burbank Airport, officials said. The driver of the car and her 4-year-old daughter were not hurt, although their car's hood was pinned under the aircraft.

The carrier, known for bargain ticket prices, has not had a fatality in its 30-year history, Southwest officials said.

Flight 1455 left Las Vegas about two hours behind schedule, passenger Kevin McCoy said.

"They told us it might be a rough landing, but none of us were expecting this," McCoy told KNBC-TV.

Airline officials did not know of any turbulence reported to the passengers, spokesperson Ginger Hardage said.

McCoy said the plane made a short approach toward the runway and seemed to be going fast.

"The angle that we approached the runway was much steeper than I was used to," said McCoy, who was sitting in the second row.

The Boeing 737-300 ripped a gaping hole through the airport fence and stopped on Hollywood Way about 50 feet from a Chevron station.

It came to rest with its nose on the ground. Although the plane leaked about 10 gallons of fuel, there was no fire.

The front landing gear collapsed but what caused the plane to hurtle off the runway was under investigation, said Louis Diaz, a spokesperson with the

Federal Aviation Administration.

The weather had been stormy in the area throughout the day Sunday. However, Southwest CEO Herb Kelleher told reporters Monday at company headquarters in Dallas that rain had stopped falling at the airport about four hours before the accident, and another Southwest plane had landed uneventfully on the 6,000-foot runway about two minutes before Flight 1455.

Kelleher said he would not expect the cause to be determined for at least a year.

"Nobody who considers himself an expert will attempt to offer a cause of the crash right after it happened," Kelleher said.

He said he did not know where the plane touched down on the runway or whether its thrust reversers functioned. The reversers redirect the engine thrust to slow a plane after landing.

Kelleher had said earlier that the plane's last maintenance check was performed Thursday and "there were no visible problems with the airplane." He said it was built in 1985 and has run through a total of 32,000 takeoffs and landings, which he said was not a lot.

The pilot, who was released from a hospital after treatment for a blow to his

Southwest's near miss

Southwest Airlines Flight 1455 skidded off the Burbank Airport runway, slammed through a retaining wall and came to a halt on a street, narrowly missing a gas station. The Boeing 737-300 en route from Las Vegas touched down shortly after 9 p.m. EST on Sunday.



Source: Compiled from AP wire reports. Wm. J. Casella, S. Hultman

head, has been flying 737s since 1980 and has more than 18,000 flying hours and was hired by Southwest in 1988, Kelleher said.

The first officer, who was released after evaluation at a hospital, has been working at Southwest since 1996 and has 15 years of experience, Kelleher said.

The plane may be a total loss, Kelleher said. "It's the most serious accident we've had in 29 years," he said.

Cranes hoisted the 108,000-pound aircraft off the street today and moved it onto airport property.

The plane's front emergency door failed to open when passengers tried to evacuate; it might have been damaged when the plane went through the fence, Kelleher said.

At least 1 killed in plant explosion

RADFORD, Va. (AP) — Anxious relatives waited outside Monday as rescuers searched for two workers missing after an explosion tore apart an industrial plant and killed at least one employee. Six workers were hospitalized.

"There's a lot of twisted metal everywhere you look," Fire Chief Lee Simpkins said following the blast Sunday night at New River Castings, a plant that makes auto parts.

Families of the two missing women waited outside the plant Monday as dogs from Fairfax County's search and rescue team were being brought in to search the rubble.

The last hot spot of flames was extinguished this morning.

The cause of the explosion was under investigation, but there were reports of a natural gas buildup.

Simpkins estimated damage at \$30 million to \$50 million. Witnesses said at least one wall at the main plant was destroyed.

About 100 workers were in the plant at the time of the 9:30 p.m. blast, Simpkins said.

An unknown number were treated for smoke inhalation and minor cuts and

bruises at an ambulance station set up outside the plant.

The worker found dead was identified as Curtis Grooms, 29.

Marie Hamilton said her daughter-in-law, Karen Anderson Hamilton, 35, was one of the missing workers.

"I'm just hoping and praying that she's in a cubbyhole somewhere and all right," said Hamilton.

She said her son, Douglas, was working at the plant when the explosion happened but was uninjured. The couple had been married just six months.

"I'm hoping and praying ... that things will be all right, but I'm afraid not," she said.

At one point, Karen Hamilton's father, Edward Anderson, broke through a barrier and ran toward the building, saying, "If they're not going to look for my kid, I'm going myself." Authorities restrained him.

Roy Davis said his girlfriend, Debbie Sheppard, 37, was the other missing woman. Representatives of United Cities Gas Co. were at the scene.

Witnesses said flames rose 20 feet above the plant roof.

"All of a sudden I saw a big orange ball of fire, and everything was pitch black,"



AP

plant worker Scott Hetherington told the newspaper.

The explosion "sounded like something was coming through the roof of my house," said Sherri Birkelbach, who lives about three blocks away.

Seven workers were hospitalized but one was released this morning. Two were in serious but stable condition and the conditions of the others weren't available.

Others were treated for smoke inhalation and minor cuts and bruises.

FBI approved tear gas in Waco siege

DALLAS (AP) — The FBI gained Attorney General Janet Reno's approval to use tear gas at the Branch Davidian siege by providing misleading or incomplete data, according to *The Dallas Morning News*.

The newspaper's copyright story in Monday's editions quoted a confidential report of a veteran FBI behavioral expert's interview, in which he said key information was not provided to Reno when the agency began lobbying her to approve gassing the Mount Carmel compound near Waco.

Peter Smerick, a retired agent whose psychological profiles were termed the best predictors of the 1993 Branch Davidians' deaths by negotiators involved in the 51-day siege, told agency interviewers that he believed "the FBI misled the attorney general by giving her 'a slanted view of the operation' in Waco."

Smerick, in the 1995 report obtained by the newspaper, blamed FBI headquarters for convincing the attorney general that using tear gas was the only means to peacefully end the standoff.

Lawyers representing the Branch Davidians in a federal wrongful death lawsuit said they have not seen the 15-page FBI report, written by the agency's general counsel's office, and la-

beled "attorney-client privileged and confidential."

Five profiling memos, warning that using force against the sect would intensify a "bunker mentality" in which "they would rather die than surrender," were not in the briefing book that FBI leaders gave Reno when they started lobbying her on April 1, 1993 to approve using tear gas.

Seven days later, Branch Davidian leader David Koresh and about 80 of his followers died as the compound burned.

Smerick said in the FBI report that he and one of the agency's top negotiators had "concluded that the best strategy would have been to convert the Branch Davidian compound into a prison and simply announce to Koresh that he was in the custody of the United States."

In late 1993, Smerick retired from the FBI and is now a behavioral consultant.

"Smerick speculated that FBI headquarters viewed this option as one which would have caused them to 'lose face' and therefore was unacceptable," the report stated.

The memos by Smerick also warned that the sect considers its home "sacred ground" and would "fight back to the death" if law officers tried to enter the compound.

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY STUDENT MEDIA BOARD IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR

Editor THE BATTALION

- Including radio and online editions -

Summer 2000

(The summer editor will serve May 22 through Aug. 11, 2000.)

Fall 2000

(The fall editor will serve Aug. 14 through Dec. 15, 2000.)

Qualifications for editor in chief of *The Battalion* are:

- Be a Texas A&M student in good standing with the University and enrolled in at least six credit hours (4 if a graduate student) during the term of office (unless fewer credits are required to graduate);
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) and at least a 2.00 grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) in the semester immediately prior to the appointment, the semester of appointment and semester during the term of office. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (4 if a graduate student) must have been taken for that semester;
- Have completed JOUR 301 (Mass Communication, Law and Society), or equivalent;
- Have at least one year experience in a responsible editorial position on *The Battalion* or comparable daily college newspaper,
 - OR -
 - Have at least one year editorial experience on a commercial newspaper,
 - OR -
 - Have completed at least 12 hours journalism, including JOUR 203 and 303 (Media Writing I and II), and JOUR 304 (Editing for the Mass Media), or equivalent.

Editor AGGIELAND

2001

Qualifications for editor in chief of the *Aggieland* yearbook are:

- Be a Texas A&M student in good standing with the University and enrolled in at least six credit hours (4 if a graduate student) during the term of office (unless fewer credits are required to graduate);
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) and at least a 2.00 grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) in the semester immediately prior to the appointment, the semester of appointment and semester during the term of office. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (4 if a graduate student) must have been taken for that semester;
- Have completed JOUR 210 (Graphics) and JOUR 301 (Mass Communication, Law and Society), or equivalent;
- Have demonstrated ability in writing through university coursework or equivalent experience;
- Have at least one year experience in a responsible position on the *Aggieland* or comparable college yearbook.

Application forms should be picked up and returned to Francia Cagle in the Student Media office, room 014A Reed McDonald Building. Deadline for submitting application: noon Wednesday, March 22, 2000. Applicants will be interviewed during the Student Media Board Meeting beginning at 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, March 28, 2000, in room 221F Reed McDonald.

An Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer Committed to Diversity

SMOOTHIE KING

*MARCH 1ST - MAY 31ST

HAPPY HOUR

8:00AM - 10:00AM 6:00PM - 8:00PM

SAVE 30% OFF ANY SIZE SMOOTHIE EVERYDAY
"Be Good To Yourself"

New Extended Hours

7:30am-11:00pm M-T
7:30am-9:00pm F
10:00am-9:00pm Sat
11:00am-10:00pm Sun

7:30am-10:00pm M-F
10:00am-10:00pm Sat
11:00am-10:00pm Sun

NORTHGATE
601 UNIVERSITY
268-7668

KROGER CENTER
SOUTHWEST PARKWAY
696-5464

THE BATTALION

is looking for

- CITY REPORTERS
- COPY EDITORS
- PROOFERS
- SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY WRITERS
- OPINION COLUMNISTS
- PAGE DESIGNERS
- CARTOONISTS
- GRAPHIC ARTISTS



- Report on issues that matter to our campus.
- See news as it happens.
- Learn about the journalism field.
- Gain valuable experience.

Pick up your application at 013 Reed McDonald, or call 845-3313 for information.

Come hear social and will be