



HOSSLEY ★ E M B R Y
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American Airlines' Cabin Pressure System Defective

On October 20, 2000, AA Flight 2224 departed Dallas/Ft. Worth Airport at 7 a.m. for Chicago. After the flight reached its cruising altitude of 35,000 feet, Laura, a female passenger, sensed a profound change in pressure in her ears. As she looked around the cabin she noticed other passengers who appeared to also sense something was wrong. The oxygen masks did not deploy. Almost immediately she began experiencing a ringing sensation in her ear. After she returned to Dallas Laura immediately sought medical attention and learned that she had suffered a tear in the wall of her middle-ear which is very rare and normally associated with a severe change in pressure. The injury, a "perilymph fistula", is most commonly suffered by scuba divers or acrobatic pilots who experience large pressure changes. After a surgical attempt to correct the condition, Laura learned that she had permanently lost hearing in her right ear. She complained to American and asked for help with the medical bills but was rebuffed. Laura contacted a few lawyers who were not interested in the case due to the difficulty in proving the pressure system malfunctioned, causation issues, and the prospect of taking on American Airlines.

Jeff Embry, with Hossley & Embry, agreed to represent Laura and vigorously pursued the case. The discovery process revealed documents which indicated that the pressure system on Flight 2224 and the warning lights associated with the system were malfunctioning at the time of the flight. Only days after the flight was completed the aircraft entered a major annual maintenance program in Oklahoma City, where it was noted in records that the pressure system was malfunctioning.

AA FORM NO. ESB-100 CPN # 1002148 (7/93)		3798982		PIC	OIA
REPAIR ITEMS		ORIGINATED BY: William Hooper	CARD NO. 4355	0252	
DATE 10-23-00		AREA E/E	N. NO. 522	* 3 7 9 8 9 8 2 *	
STATION TUL		TYPE OPN. LC			
DISCREPANCY					
1. When performing Bite check of primary and standby cabin pressure controllers ACT light remains on steady for both systems.					
REPAIRS / CORRECTIVE ACTION					
1. Troubleshoot and found pin n of R50-1039 pushed back slightly in receptical reinserted pin into receptical, locked, OK properly sealed, flight ops checked OK					
TA Perform cabin pressurization functional OK					

7 ESB-100 38 (7/93)		3799070		PIC	OIA
REPAIR ITEMS		ORIGINATED BY: P. Foreman	CARD NO. SPECIAL	1010	
DATE 10-25-00		AREA C/CKPT	N. NO. 522	* 3 7 9 9 0 7 0 *	
STATION TUL		TYPE OPN. LC			
DISCREPANCY					
1. PNEUMATIC PRESSURE GAUGE DOES NOT GO BELOW 10 WHEN AIR IS OFF					
REPAIRS / CORRECTIVE ACTION					
1. Found pin pulled out of plug, reinserted pin. ops c/c good.					

FORM NO. ESB-100 N # 1002156 (7/93)		3603078		PIC	OIA
REPAIR ITEMS		ORIGINATED BY: Keith Johnson	CARD NO. 28253		
DATE 9-22-00		AREA C/CKPT	N. NO. 522	* 3 6 0 3 0 7 8 *	
STATION TUL		TYPE OPN. LC			
DISCREPANCY					
1. FLOW LIGHT FOR PRESSURIZATION SYSTEM INOP					
REPAIRS / CORRECTIVE ACTION					
1. Removed & Replaced #1 Press. Controller per M.M.					
TA ops check OK					

Maintenance records related to aircraft 522, the aircraft which flew Flight 527, indicate that at least 5 different maintenance issues existed in the pressure system at the time of Flight 527.

