

One person was found in the aisle that had died of thermal injuries.

A Flight Attendant and a passenger attempted to evacuate through the tail cone. The release mechanism was later found to be mechanically inoperable. The tail cone was not jettisoned by responding firefighters. Both persons died of smoke inhalation in the tail cone. There was a delay in firefighters locating their bodies after the interior fire was controlled.

The surviving passengers and First Officer evacuated out the left and right forward doors (L1 and R1), as well as the left over-wing exit. The escape slide was initially not inflated and survivors were jumping to the ground or were lowered by an off duty Flight Attendant. The First Officer inflated the slide by pulling the manual inflation handle from the ground. The Captain escaped out his sliding window using the escape rope.

ARFF units and thirteen (13) firefighters responded from two airport fire stations. Response was delayed by the fog and having to respond around many aircraft backed up on the taxiways. All but one ARFF unit first arrived at the 727. Foam was applied to the fuel spill. ARFF questioned tower personnel regarding the location of the second aircraft. The one fire unit that had not arrived on scene at the 727 found the DC-9 and reported that it was fully involved in fire. The only ground fire involved the number 2 engine and its immediate area. All airport fire units then responded to the location of the DC-9. The ground fire was extinguished and an interior attack was attempted with hose lines through the left side over-wing exit and forward door (L1), as well as with turrets through window



openings. Access to both areas was provided by ladders. According to ARFF, this attack was abandoned because of the intensity of the fire and the hazard to firefighters. A short time later the fire breached the roof of the DC-9 and turret streams controlled the fire. 8,500 gallons of foam solution was utilized. The Fire Chief told the NTSB that he did not order the tail cone to be jettisoned because he considered the interior fire non-survivable, the hazard to firefighters from the number 2 engine ground fire, and that it vent the fire within the fuselage.

This incident illustrates the importance of accessing and opening all doors, hatches, and other egress systems as soon as possible. As in the case of the tail cone area on the DC-9, there may be incapacitated persons just inside these openings that can be quickly and easily rescued. These openings will also help ventilate smoke and heat, as well as create a more survivable environment inside the aircraft. As time and resources permit, the goal should also be to deploy a charged hose line to every opening. This allows for better application of agent from hose line nozzles for quicker control of the interior fire. The more agent directly

applied to the fire, the faster the fire will be extinguished and cooler the interior will become. As discussed before, if entry for interior fire attack is not safe, the next best alternative is from immediately outside the aircraft through all available openings. This type of tactic is much more timely and effective than waiting for the top of the aircraft to burn off and using turret streams to extinguish the fire.

In a narrow body aircraft, like this DC-9, firefighters can stand on the wing or ground and easily discharge foam from hose line nozzles throughout the aircraft interior. On wide body aircraft, because of excessive heights, from door sills to the ground, firefighters will need something to stand on, such as a ladder, mobile stair truck, top of the wing, top of an ARFF apparatus, or some other type of platform. ARFF needs to identify more creative ways to establish access and safe footing while attacking interior fires from outside the aircraft.

Escape slides are the fastest way to evacuate people out of an aircraft. Unconscious and incapacitated persons can also be