

spread to the interior of the aircraft. The aircraft was headed to Europe with five persons on board and had a full load of fuel. The cargo consisted of mail and miscellaneous freight. There were no hazardous materials on board. The main upper cargo deck contained fourteen (14) cargo containers. The impact sheared off the landing gear and engines. Leaking fuel immediately ignited. Fire spread into the interior through a hole breached in the rear belly of the aircraft by one of the sheared off engines. The five persons on board used both pilot escape windows to evacuate the aircraft.

Nine (9) ARFF units responded from two airport fire stations and an ARFF training facility. The first three ARFF units arrived within 35 seconds of the initial notification. The remainder of the ARFF equipment was on scene within four minutes. Over fifty ARFF trained airport personnel were involved in the fire-fighting operations. Needless to say, the exterior fuel spill fire was quickly controlled within 30 seconds of arrival. Now came the real challenge, controlling the fire that was spreading on the interior of the aircraft. The ARFF IC had requested a full response from the off airport mutual aid structural fire department. Ten engines, four truck companies, two rescue companies, and 125 firefighters responded. A tactical support unit, haz mat team, foam unit, large capacity pumping unit, and large diameter hose wagon also responded.

The fire spread up the interior fuselage walls from the bottom of the aircraft. Containers on the main deck became involved and the fire eventually self-vented out the top of the aircraft. A tail wind was slowly pushing the fire towards the front of the aircraft, from container to con-

tainer. There was no easy access to the interior of the aircraft. The cargo containers, which had shifted during the crash, formed to the interior configuration of the aircraft. The power was off and the main cargo door on the left side, forward of the wing, was inoperable. The remainder of the doors and hatches were permanently secured or jammed shut. Six engine companies were used to set up a relay supply line from two remote hydrants. Multiple hose lines and three tower ladders were used for fire attack. The tower ladders did most of the work through holes burned through the top of the aircraft. AFFF, protein foam, and high expansion foam was used. Several flashovers occurred inside the aircraft.

Later in the incident, with the assistance of an air carrier representative, a forklift was used to open the main cargo door. Two holes were cut at the bottom of the door to access releasing handles. The plan was to offload the containers and overhaul them outside the aircraft. The containers were constructed of aluminum and were so badly damaged that the first one lifted immediately fell apart. The NTSB was on the scene and then requested that the

remainder of the containers be left in place. They were concerned that the aircraft had not been loaded properly or that some of the containers were not locked in. They were worried that important evidence might be destroyed.

High expansion foam was used unsuccessfully to control deep-seated burning Class A materials. The fire was finally extinguished, after several hours, using AFFF applied by the ladder towers, after most of the aircraft crown had burned off. It continued to smolder for two days. The aircraft and its cargo were a total loss. Postal Inspectors coordinated the removal and salvage of the mail. The aircraft was defueled, while it was still smoldering, using the over-wing fueling ports. The openings and the screens had to be removed to accomplish this.

In 1996, a DC-10 cargo freighter was flying at 33,000 feet when smoke alarms sounded in the cockpit, indicating that smoke was present at position 6. By the time the plane landed, the smoke had activated smoke alarms up to position 10. This area is located at the center of the upper cargo compartment. There was

