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British Airways Crew Commended By AFA Took Quick Action Safely Evacuating Passengers From 777 In Las Vegas

The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA), is proud to applaud the life-saving action of the crew of British Airways flight 2276. Pilots acted quickly to abort take off of the Boeing 777 due to an engine fire and flight attendants executed a safe evacuation at Las Vegas McCarran International Airport before the aircraft was completely consumed by flames.



"Early reports indicate that the flight attendant crew conducted a text book evacuation, saving nearly 200 hundred lives that could have been lost in the fire," said Sara Nelson, International President of AFA. "We are aviation's first responders, and the flight attendants evacuated those passengers with skill and professionalism. a terrible tragedy was averted. The Association of flight attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO (AFA) salutes our British colleagues for their heroic performance in the face of grave danger."

Passengers are crediting flight attendants with saving lives yesterday, and this incident once again reminds regulators and the traveling public of the primary role of flight attendants as aviation's first responders. Passenger Dominic Worthington told MSNBC, "If it weren't for the captain and crew, there would have been fatalities . . . The crew reacted very, very quickly and instructed everyone to evacuate. They deployed the slides and everyone evacuated . . . As I stood at the top of the slide the flight attendant said 'you have to jump.' The crew performed brilliantly."

The incident highlighted an all-too-common occurrence in airline crashes, according to Nelson. "*Video and still photos of the incident showed dozens of passengers on the tarmac with their carry-on bags. We expect the NTSB investigation will show that the bags slowed the evacuation and may even have caused some of the injuries.*" Nelson implored passengers to follow the commands of the flight attendant crew during an evacuation and leave your bags behind. "Your life may depend on it," she said.

AFA said the incident highlights the urgency of its call for a Congressionally-mandated study of evacuation standards for certification of new and existing aircraft redesign. Current standards were developed over 30 years ago and do not reflect the realities of modern air travel. "There are more seats jammed more tightly together, more carry-on bags, more passengers, more electronics," said Nelson. "Evacuation standards need to reflect the new reality of conditions onboard our aircraft."

FMI: www.afacwa.org

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