

# T&A not off-limits for TSA

## 3 killed on jet sent to pick up ex-prez

HOUSTON — A private jet en route to Houston to pick up former President Bush clipped a light pole and crashed yesterday as it approached Hobby Airport in thick fog, killing all three people aboard.

The Gulfstream G-1159A jet went down about 6:15 a.m. in an undeveloped area 1½ miles south of the airport, officials said.

The former president had been scheduled to travel to Ecuador for a conference.

"I was deeply saddened to learn of the plane crash this morning," Bush said through spokesman Tom Frechette.

"I'd flown with this group before and know them well. I join in sending heartfelt condolences to each and every member of their families."

The names of the three crew members were not immediately released.

The National Transportation Safety Board said the "black box" flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder had been recovered, and appeared to be in good enough shape to read the data.

Mark Rosenker, the NTSB's vice chairman, said the agency would examine a number of factors, including the aircraft's condition, what the pilots were doing and the weather.

"We are treating this at this moment as a transportation accident. We have no reason to believe it is anything other than that," Rosenker said.

Roger Smith, a spokesman for the Houston Airport System, said the pilot didn't indicate any problem, and the landing was routine until communications abruptly stopped.

Dense fog blanketed most of the area.

A spokesman said it had two male pilots and a female flight attendant aboard.

— ASSOCIATED PRESS

## Women, too, face hands-on security

By DAVID WEBER

Travelers passing through Logan International Airport this holiday may find that their private areas aren't so private anymore when it comes to pat-down searches at security checkpoints.

Transportation Security Administration officials say increased concerns about bombs being hidden on a person's body require more intensive torso searches, and women's breasts and the genital and buttocks regions of both sexes are not off-limits.

"We really need our passengers to be our partners and to think about what they're wearing and what they're packing," TSA Northeast Security Director George Naccara said yesterday.

He said people wearing bulky clothes such as heavy sweaters could find themselves tagged for a thorough pat-down search. Frequent fliers already may be familiar with the security practice, which was implemented

in September after two Chechen women allegedly smuggled bombs onto Russian airliners in August.

Naccara said the secondary searches are conducted by TSA employees of the same sex as the traveler, and travelers may request they be taken to a separate room.

Naccara said travelers can decrease the probability of a secondary search by wearing form-fitting clothes that could not conceal a bomb.

TSA spokeswoman Ann Davis said travelers also can help avoid long lines by cutting back on the amount of metal jewelry and other metal objects such as large belt buckles or pants with metal studs.

"We want people to know what to expect," Davis said, adding that security officers who conduct the more intrusive secondary searches have been trained to tell the passengers where they plan to search before they do it.

## Logan screeners keep us abreast of stiffer regs

How many breasts must be fondled to keep the flying public safe?

That's the government's new anti-terror dilemma. But all we know for sure is that airport screeners are tens of thousands of breasts down — as in patted down — and tens of millions to go. Not to mention yet-to-be patted passenger derrieres and genitals.

Yes, believe it or not, these are the new Transportation Security Administration rules, turning Thanksgiving airport travel into a sort of groping Russian roulette.

No wonder the ranks of screeners, for the first time in memory, are full.

"It's creepy ... scary ... icky," says MIT engineer

Sommer Gentry. She's 27 and has been "patted down" so intimately so many times (do you think 27 and very attractive have anything to do with it?), she's all but given up flying and "started taking Amtrak."

Say Gentry and several other female grop-ees-to-be, often an enthusiastic male screener who volunteers to begin his arduous task. At least Gentry knew enough to demand a woman, as federal law allows. Yet on one flight two teenage grop-ees-to-be, right behind her, either didn't know or didn't care object to the male screener who sidled up beside them. (Do you think 17 and very attractive had anything to do with it?)

"It is creepy," says Laura Keegan of Kingston, another (surely a coincidence) good-looking 30-something

patted down Friday, despite wearing spandex. Also patted: her 5-year-old son. This happened as scores of passengers strolled by, some leering, some smirking, some making smart remarks, as she was coming home from Orlando.

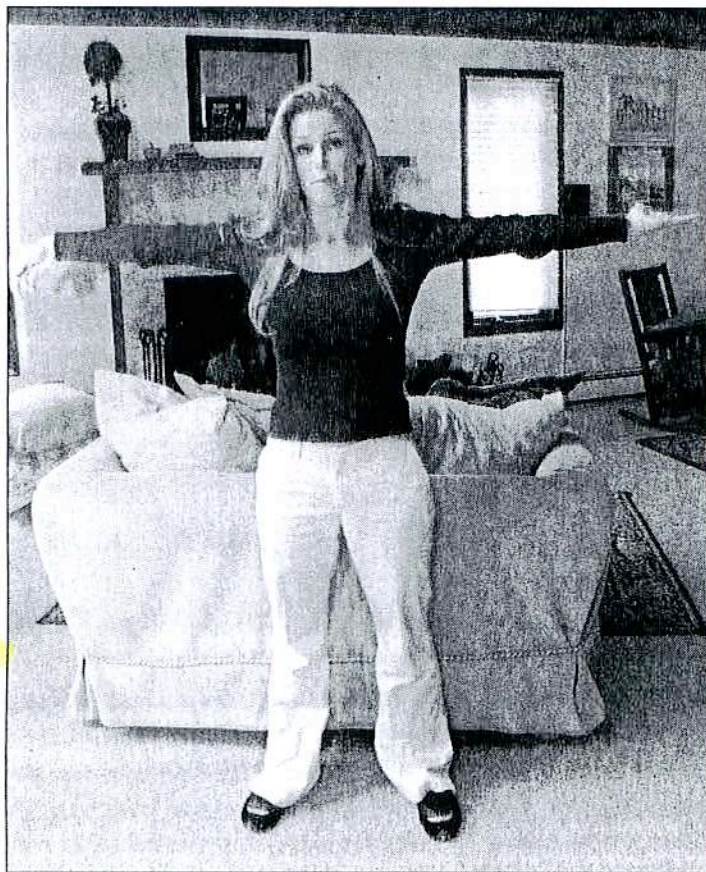
Keegan said screeners told her to stand on a mat with "maybe 2½ feet apart, then to hold your hands out with your palms up ... I had to tell my son, 'They're going to touch your privates.' And in a sense I felt if I complained I'd be un-American."

Said Nancy Richards-Stower of Scituate, "All of a sudden I heard, 'I will be using the back of my hand when I touch your breast.' And she (at least she got a girl) patted all over each breast. I can't tell you how humiliating it was."

A former Clinton campaign worker on her way to his Arkansas library opening, Richards-Stower shouted, "I hate Ashcroft," referring to the soon-to-be-former attorney general, throughout her ordeal, also before other passengers.

The law allows you a private groping room, though this was known neither by Keegan nor Richards-Stower, who, at 53, is that rare middle-aged grop-ee. But she's extraordinarily well-preserved.

The common denominator among these women? Underwire bras, typically worn by bigger breasted women. They trip the metal detector. The question for today: Which guarantees a



STAFF PHOTO BY RENEE DEKONA

'It is creepy. ... (you) hold your hands out with your palms up ... I had to tell my son, "They're going to touch your privates." And in a sense I felt if I complained I'd be un-American.' LAURA KEEGAN, ABOVE, ON FRISKY TSA

faster pat-down, any old metal detector beep, or the big-breast beep?

Gentry said she has no idea, "But I do have large breasts."

The TSA insists, anecdotal evidence aside, its newly empowered screeners (mostly male) are not focusing unfairly on good-looking, big-breasted women, age 15 to 40 or 53, if holding up well. "But we have given screeners a little more

leeway to utilize those pat-downs," says the TSA's Ann Davis.

"I'll say," says Richards-Stower.

Yet what do we make of the fact that yet another good-looking 30-something — the TSA's own flaming redhead Davis, traveling incognito — was patted down four times in one week?

Needless to say all this has led to ridicule of the TSA, now known as the T&A

among wisecrackers quipping about post-pat-down cigarettes and heading out to Logan if one is feeling lonely. Karl Zahn of New Hampshire suggests holiday lines might move faster "if we just all turn around and frisk each other." Certainly we don't find such levity helpful.

Margery Eagan's radio show airs at noon weekdays and 9 a.m. Saturday on 96.9 FM Talk.