

Two Delta Airlines workers killed and one injured at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport

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Early in the morning of Tuesday, August 27 two workers were killed, and one person was seriously injured at the Delta TechOps facility near the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta.

The Clayton County Medical Examiner's office said the victims were Mirko Marweg, 58, who lived in Stone Mountain, Georgia, and Luis Aldarondo, 37, who lived in Newnan, Georgia. The name of another employee who was seriously injured has not been disclosed.

Delta spokesperson Samantha Moore Facticeau said in an email that the injured worker remained under medical care as of September 4.

The Delta TechOps, TOC 3, Dept. 391-Wheel & Brake Shop facility, where the accident happened, handles Delta's maintenance, repair, and overhaul operations, along with more than 150 other aviation and airline customers in the United States and internationally. The facility operates out of large hangars near the airport. The incident occurred inside the shop, where a tire exploded during maintenance.

Mirko Marweg, who had worked for Delta for over twenty years, was planning to retire in a few months. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* talked to Marweg's wife, Scottie Ann Marweg, who described her husband as a giving man. 'He helped anybody out,' she said. 'He was a loving father, husband, and brother.'

Marweg's son, Andre Coleman, told WXIA-TV Tuesday that he wanted to see his father because he didn't believe he was dead. But a medical examiner told the family the body was unrecognizable. According to ABC News, the family had to rely on tattoos and a Mississippi State lanyard around his neck to identify him. Coleman said his father was a loving man who,

just Sunday, had helped change the oil in his motorcycle. "That's the kind of dad he was. He was always there."

The second victim, Luis Aldarondo, was from Puerto Rico and trained at a facility in Florida before moving to Atlanta to work as a contractor for Delta.

Jonathan Ibarra, president of the South Avionics Training Center outside of Orlando, where Aldarondo trained, said he was "motivated to succeed." He graduated in 2019 after studying there for a year. Ibarra said, "He was so happy! He was motivating everyone and saying, like hey, you can do this; you know he was good. He was really, really good,"

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration is investigating the accident, and the Federal Aviation Administration said it was aware of the incident and is 'in communication with the airline.' Delta said it is working with authorities.

In a memo sent to workers after the tragic accident in Atlanta, Delta Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer John Laughter, whose salary in 2021 was \$650,000 shed crocodile tears, stating, "I'm deeply saddened to share that three TechOps team members were involved in an accident that took place early this morning. Tragically, two of our team members involved passed away, and one other team member was seriously injured. We are extending our full support to their families during this challenging time and investigating to determine what happened."

He claimed disingenuously that "your safety comes first" and "we are all in this together." He claimed that counselors and other resources would be made available.

Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens posted a statement on

X about the incident declaring, “I offer my deepest condolences to the family and loved ones of the deceased Delta employees. My thoughts are also with those who were injured, and I hope for their swift and full recovery. AFRD, APD, and HJAIA teams are on the scene, working diligently to address the situation.”

This, from an individual who presides over a city that is home to 13 billionaires where the infrastructure is crumbling, and the widely reviled “Cop City,” one of the largest militarized police training centers in the US, is being built at a cost of \$90 million.

For its part, the International Association of Machinists (IAM), which claims to represent Delta workers, also issued a statement deploring the “tragic incident” while calling “on Delta and the relevant authorities to quickly investigate how this happened,” thereby washing its hands of any responsibility to defend the interests of workers and itself hold the company accountable.

As the highly paid IAM bureaucrats are well aware, even if OSHA investigates and finds the company was negligent, there will be at most a slap-on-the-wrist fine, and even that will inevitably be appealed by management.

For instance, in 2022, brothers Ben Morrissey, aged 32, and Max Morrissey, 34, were burned to death in an explosion and fire at the BP Husky oil refinery in Oregon, Ohio, just outside of Toledo. OSHA fined BP Products North America a total of \$156,250.

Caterpillar worker Steven Dierkes was killed instantly in June by what the coroner termed “thermal annihilation” when he fell into a crucible of molten iron heated to over 2,600 degrees. OSHA fined the company a measly \$145,000, which it is appealing. Dierkes’ death took place just six months after contractor Scott Adams died when he fell through a hole at the same facility.

The heavy equipment company has a record of safety violations over many decades. However, it netted \$24.29 billion in profits in 2023, and CEO Jim Umpleby made \$25.8 million last year.

In 2023 American Eagle, a subsidiary of American Airlines, is being fined only a little more than \$15,000 after a fatal accident where a worker was sucked into an aircraft engine at Montgomery Regional Airport in Alabama. The worker, Courtney Edwards, age 34, and a mother of three, was a ground agent who worked for

Piedmont Airlines, one of three subsidiary airlines of American Eagle.

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that there were 5,486 fatal work injuries recorded in the United States in 2022, a 5.7-percent increase over 2021. That is to say, a worker dies every 96 minutes from a work-related injury in the United States.

The latest workplace deaths in Atlanta come ahead of a scheduled September 12 vote for 33,000 IAM represented Boeing workers in Oregon and Washington state. Boeing and the IAM recently announced a tentative agreement for the workers. The IAM is preparing the machinery to impose a contract even with a majority “no” vote. Despite workers turning in an overwhelming strike authorization vote, union officials want to force workers to vote again on whether to strike during the vote on the contract, stating that any vote to strike below a two-thirds majority will result in the automatic ratification of the contract.



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