

Feds Release Flight-Related Cat Incident Data for January

One cat escaped its carrier before a flight.

Posted: March 08, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

One flight-related cat incident occurred during air transportation in January 2007 when a cat that was being put onto a flight escaped its carrier and ran away, according to a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) report released March 5.

The flight-related cat incident occurred Jan. 6 after a passenger checked a cat in a carrier onto a United Airlines flight from Washington, D.C. to Sacramento, Calif.

While the airline was attempting to load the carrier onto the aircraft at Washington-Dulles airport, the carrier door opened and the cat jumped out and ran across a taxiway, according to the airline's incident report on the matter.

The carrier was in good condition and no determination could be made as to when the carrier door became ajar. An extensive search was unable to find the cat.

The airline determined that all its procedures were followed and no corrective action was taken.

The incident was the first of 2007 to involve the loss, injury or death of a cat during air transportation, according to DOT data.

A total of 26 animal fatalities — mostly dogs — occurred before, during or after air transport in 2006, according to the DOT. Eleven animals were injured and 12 animals were lost at United States airports last year.