ValuJet not cleared to haul oxygen generators on doomed flight

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Washington (CNN) -- ValuJet was not authorized to be carrying the 50 to 60 oxygen generators that were in the forward cargo hold of Flight 592, which crashed into the Florida Everglades on Saturday, federal investigators said.

The Federal Aviation Administration reported that the oxygen generators may have sparked a fire, explosion or both aboard the plane. All 110 people on the jet were killed in the crash.

"ValuJet is not authorized to transport hazardous materials. As the airline elected not to carry hazardous materials, it is neither authorized or equipped to do so," the FAA said in a written statement.

"If ValuJet had elected to transport hazardous materials, its staff would be required to undergo more in-depth training to insure that such materials are transported properly."

Oxygen generators are classified as hazardous material.

Infant's death raises toll

The death toll from the crash of ValuJet Flight 592 into the Florida Everglades was raised to 110 people Wednesday, after authorities discovered that a baby had been aboard the plane.

Relatives and friends of the victims planned to hold a memorial service near the crash site later in the day, and some relatives began filing lawsuits related to the crash.

Investigators and ValuJet officials said one of the passengers was carrying an infant who was not listed on the flight manifest. The name and age of the child were not disclosed.

Officials initially believed Flight 592 carried 104 passengers and five crew members when it crashed Saturday, killing everyone on board.

The jet's flight data recorder, found Monday, continued to yield information, but the cockpit voice recorder had not been found as of Wednesday morning, despite being equipped with a sonar-detection device, CNN Correspondent Martin Savidge reported. (155K AIFF or WAV sound)
Recovery teams were to begin removing the main wreckage and surface debris. They kept up the search for human remains. (380K QuickTime movie) As of Tuesday, at least 12 bags of body parts had been recovered.

**Memorial**

Authorities were making arrangements to bus up to 100 friends, relatives and grief counselors to a location near the crash site for a memorial service and an opportunity to lay wreaths and flowers for their loved ones.

Evelyn Wilson, who lost her sister-in-law in the crash, says visiting the place where a loved one died can make up for not being able to see body. (200K AIFF or WAV sound)

Although mourners will be shielded from the sometimes gruesome findings of searchers, the two groups share an emotional bond, said W.J. Alvarez Jr. of the Metro-Dade Fire Rescue unit. (130K AIFF or WAV sound)

Ironically, a new Federal Aviation Administration directive goes into effect on Wednesday, ordering operators of all DC-9s similar to the ill-fated ValuJet to inspect, insulate and reroute a wiring bundle in the cockpit to avoid short circuits that could cause smoke or fire. The last word from the ValuJet crew was a warning of smoke in the cockpit.

**Lawsuits filed**

Lawyers hired by the families of at least five passengers hope to use a Florida law that allows damages for "pre-impact mental anguish."

That means damages may be awarded for the moments of indescribable terror those on board suffered as the plane plunged towards the Everglades. If negligence is proven, a jury may also consider the suffering of family members who must deal with imagining loved ones plunging to their deaths.

The suits filed so far name as defendants ValuJet and Aerothrust Corp., the Miami maintenance company that serviced the DC-9 before its final flight.

*Correspondent Martin Savidge and the Associated Press contributed to this report.*