

## NZ officials seize black boxes from LATAM Boeing 787

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**Auckland: New Zealand investigators seized the flight recorder from a Boeing-made LATAM aircraft, searching for the cause of a mid-air plunge that injured dozens of terrified travellers.**

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner was en route from Sydney to Auckland on Monday evening when it lurched earthward without warning, slinging some unrestrained passengers out of their seats and smashing others into the cabin ceiling.

"Everyone started screaming, crying," said Australian receptionist Ellie Addison, one of 263 passengers aboard flight LA800.

"People were launched out of their seats, there was blood pouring from people's faces."

It is the latest in a string of headline-grabbing safety incidents to trouble US plane maker Boeing.

Both Boeing and Chile-based LATAM Airlines have promised to cooperate with authorities to pinpoint the cause of the unspecified "technical event".

Confusion has clouded early investigations, with both Chilean and New Zealand safety watchdogs suggesting the other nation was taking the lead.

New Zealand accident investigators said Tuesday they had started gathering evidence, "including seizing the cockpit voice and flight data recorders".

But, a spokesman added, "it is Chile's investigation".

Sales administrator Veronica Martinez said it felt like the plane had stopped mid-air, and then "we just plunged".

"People were flying, babies fell, it was horrible, lots of people were injured," she told AFP.

Emergency crews raced to Auckland Airport to meet the incoming flight, dispatching more than a dozen ambulances and other medical vehicles.

Support worker Gabriel Felipe de Oliveira Adaime said the flight was "traumatising", while fellow passenger Agustin Ramonda said it was "one of the worst three seconds of my life".

Paramedics said they treated about 50 patients. Four people remained in hospital as of Tuesday morning, Health officials told AFP.

The flight arrived on time, LATAM said in a statement.

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