

## Greenville-Spartanburg airport flight delayed after wheel problems

Nose wheel heated up; Mesa executive says passengers in no danger

By Paul Alongi, Staff Writer  
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Federal aviation authorities said Sunday they are investigating a United Express flight that had tire trouble while taxiing to the runway at Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport.

The crew of flight 7156 reported a problem with a nose wheel at 6:37 a.m. Saturday and asked to return to the gate, said Kathleen Bergen, a spokeswoman for the Federal Aviation Administration.

The tires began to heat up, and the plane had to occasionally stop while taxiing back to the gate, she said.

More than 40 people were on board the flight, which was headed to Chicago, said GSP spokeswoman Rosylin Weston. No injuries were reported, she said.

The flight was operated by Mesa Air Group.

Paul Foley, Mesa's chief operating officer, said the captain felt the nose wheel steering tightening and stopped the plane. A maintenance crew inspected and reported that the plane had a flat tire, Foley said.

It was one of two nitrogen-filled tires together at the nose of the plane, he said.

While fire trucks followed the plane to the gate, that was routine, and no emergency was declared, he said.

"There was never any risk to any of the passengers," Foley said.

The tire was replaced and the plane departed without incident, he said.

The deflation was attributed to "foreign object debris," which could include a bag tag or a fork from a catering business, Foley said.

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