

Jury awards \$49.5M to family of Boeing 737 Max crash victim



Photo shows debris of the crashed airplane of Ethiopia Airlines, near Bishoftu, a town some 60 kilometers southeast of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on March 11, 2019

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A jury on Wednesday awarded \$49.5 million to the family of Samya Rose Stumo, a 24-year-old who died when a Boeing 737 Max plane crashed in Ethiopia in March 2019, the second deadly Max crash in a matter of months.

The trial, which started May 4 in a Chicago federal court, resolves one of the last remaining cases filed against Boeing by the families who lost loved ones in those crashes. It also marks only the second time Boeing has faced a civil trial related to the crashes, which killed 346 people.

Boeing reached an agreement with the Department of Justice to avoid criminal prosecution and has reached confidential settlements in dozens of lawsuits brought by the victims' families.

In the first case that went to trial, taking place over a week in November, a jury awarded the family of Shikha Garg more than \$28 million in damages. Another case was set to go to trial in January but the parties reached a resolution just after jury selection.

The \$49.5 million award included \$21 million in damages for Stumo's pain and suffering, according to a copy of the verdict shared with The Seattle Times. Law360 reported news of the verdict earlier Wednesday.

Shanin Specter and Elizabeth Crawford, attorneys from Kline & Specter who are representing Stumo's estate, said Wednesday we are gratified for the opportunity to try the compensatory damages case."

The attorneys intend to pursue punitive damages against Boeing executives and parts manufacturers, seeking an appeal of an earlier ruling.

The trials and settlements so far have focused on how much compensation to grant each family who lost loved ones in the fatal crashes. As part of a legal agreement reached between Boeing and most of the victims' families in 2021, Boeing admitted sole responsibility for the Ethiopian Airlines crash and the families agreed not to pursue punitive damages.

Stumo's family was one of two families who did not sign the stipulation.

Following the two fatal crashes, investigators determined that a faulty software system on the then-new Max had repeatedly forced the plane's nose down in both instances, leaving pilots unable to control the aircraft.