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United to use stun guns



November 15, 2001: 1:10 p.m. ET

Airline to put electronic tasers in cockpits, train attendants in self-defense.

NEW YORK (CNN/Money) - United Airlines will arm its cockpits with electronic tasers to help its pilots defend against any attempted hijacking.

The airline, which lost two of its planes to hijackers in the Sept. 11 terrorist attack, said Thursday that the tasers will fire an electronic charge that will disable intruders, allowing them to be subdued. The tasers can be fired at a distance of a couple of yards, allowing the threatening passenger to be subdued before they are next to the pilot.

"United and its pilots believe tasers are an important addition to enhanced cockpit security. Tasers will incapacitate an attacker without endangering the airplane," said a statement from Andrew Studdert, the airline's chief operating officer.



Courtesy: Taser International

One of the electronic tasers that United Airlines is giving pilots to defend against potential hijackers.

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The airline said it will start placing the tasers in electronically coded lockboxes in cockpits as soon as it gets necessary clearance. The tasers will be removed from the lockbox once the crew is in the cockpit and returned at the end of the flight.

United, a unit of [UAL Corp.](#) ([UAL](#): up \$0.64 to \$12.53, [Research](#), [Estimates](#)), was also one of the first major airlines to announce it had completed the reinforcement of cockpit doors to discourage hijack attempts.

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The tasers are being sold to the airline by [Taser International Inc.](#), (TASR: up \$1.38 to \$12.18, [Research, Estimates](#)) a Scottsdale, Ariz., company. The size of the contract was not announced by United or the company.

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The airline said it is also about to roll out the first phase of a specialized training program for flight attendants designed to enhance cabin security. It will provide flight attendants with other skills and knowledge that can be used to protect themselves.

United said pilots would receive additional training in self-defense techniques as well. ■

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