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Gunfight Leaves American Airlines Pilot Bystander Dead in Puerto Rico

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SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rico police said Tuesday that an autopsy report will help determine who killed an American Airlines pilot over the weekend in front of a strip club in the U.S. territory's capital.

Police Lt. Ángel Martínez told The Associated Press that a shootout early Sunday between a customer and four bouncers at District nightclub led to the death of Matthew Stapula of North Carolina. He said Stapula was a pilot with American Airlines.

The customer was identified as 36-year-old Rubén Alemán Hernández, whom Martínez said left the club after a discussion over his bill and came back with a gun and started shooting. He said bouncers returned fire and killed Alemán. He said authorities have determined that Alemán's

death was a justified homicide.

Martínez said all four bouncers were licensed to carry weapons and that one of them was shot in the knee during the incident.

No one has been charged yet in Stapula's death. Martínez said he was standing outside the club smoking when he was shot, and that police are awaiting an autopsy to determine what kind of bullet killed him.

The victim's father, Eric Stapula, called him his best friend in a Facebook post on Monday: "The world lost a great pilot today."

Written by AP's Dana Cotto

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