



NTSB National Transportation Safety Board

NTSB Investigations & Post-Accident Communications

Working Together With the NTSB

AASHTO 2012 TransComm
Raleigh, North Carolina
October 3, 2012

ntsb mission

INVESTIGATE...

- Every civil aviation accident in the U.S. (about 1,600 per year)
- Significant accidents in marine, highway, rail and pipeline
- In highway, that's about 10-12 out of 10 million annually

ntsb mission - aviation



Colgan Air Flight 3407
Clarence Center, NY
February 12, 2009

ntsb mission - highway



Multi-vehicle collision
Gray Summit, MO
August 5, 2010

ntsb mission - marine



Cargo ship collision with highway bridge
Marshall, KY
January 26, 2012

ntsb mission - rail



Freight train derailment with hazmat release
Columbus, OH
July 11, 2012

ntsb mission - pipeline



Natural gas pipeline rupture and explosion
San Bruno, CA
September 9, 2010

ntsb mission

RECOMMEND...

- Safety recommendations are most important product
- Issued to organizations that can improve safety of system

ADVOCATE...

For the adoption of our safety recommendations

ntsb mission

NTSB GOVERNANCE

- Reports directly to Congress
- Independent federal agency
- No regulatory authority
- Composed of five Board Members
- ~400 employees

board members



Current NTSB Members

Mark Rosekind, Ph.D., Christopher Hart, Chairman Deborah A.P. Hersman, Robert Sumwalt, Earl Weener, Ph.D. (left to right)

board members

BOARD MEMBER ROLE

- “Face of the NTSB” on-scene
- Role of spokesman on accident ends after leaving scene
- Investigative staff propose draft report, Members adopt or revise

investigative process

PARTY PROCESS

- NTSB picks parties that can offer technical expertise
- State DOTs frequently designated as parties
- Parties prohibited from speaking publically about NTSB's investigative findings
- Investigative information is shared between parties

investigative process

PARTIES...

- Do not participate in the analysis of the draft final report
- Can contribute to the analytical process by submitting their own findings, recommendations and probable cause
- Information about investigation goes through party coordinator

investigative process

INFO FREQUENTLY REQUESTED FROM STATE DOTs

- Roadway design plans
- Traffic counts
- Speed surveys
- Accident history

investigative process

Process of eliminating all possible causes to prove what didn't happen

- Driver(s) – 72-hour background, medical, violations history, employment background
- Roadway – design, condition, barrier systems, signage, sight distances, accident history
- Vehicle – maintenance, design and performance, recorders/ECM



investigative process

Process of eliminating all possible causes to prove what didn't happen

- Motor carrier – training, safety culture, operations
- Weather – including lighting conditions
- Survival factors – crashworthiness, restraint systems, emergency response

investigative process



Investigation timeline: 12-18 months total

investigative process



Board Meeting

investigative process

GO TEAM (arrives in 6 -18 hours)

- Team of 8-12 arrives at accident scene
- Will coordinate investigation efforts with local authorities
- Duration of on-scene investigation: 5-10 days
- Daily media briefings for 3-5 days
- Team returns to Washington
- Accident updates via press release

highway investigations

RECENT HIGHWAY INVESTIGATIONS

- Munfordville, KY – Truck/van median crossover collision
- Gray Summit, MO – Multi-vehicle collision
- New York City – Motorcoach collision with signpost
- Doswell, VA – Motorcoach road departure and overturn
- Miriam, NV – Truck/train collision at grade crossing

media relations



I-35W bridge collapse media briefing
August 1, 2007
Minneapolis, MN

media relations

INTERACTION WITH NTSB

Objective: Information Sharing

- Communicators may reach out to NTSB Public Affairs ASAP after occurrence of accident/incident to open channel of communication
- Once established, the channel will stay open throughout the course of investigation (12-18 months)

media relations

ON-SCENE INFO FLOW FROM NTSB

- Media briefings (when news is made)
- Photo opportunities
- One-on-one TV interviews (local and national)
- Social media: Twitter and YouTube

media relations

twitter



You Tube

A screenshot of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) website. The page features a dark blue header with the NTSB logo and navigation links. The main content area includes a featured article titled "NTSB Investigation" with a photo of a plane crash. Below this is a "MOST WANTED LIST" section with a video thumbnail for "Safety Management Systems". The right sidebar contains social media links and a "Join the conversation" button. The footer is organized into columns for "Resources", "About Us", "NTSB.gov", and "Publications".

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

HOME NEWS & EVENTS TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS DISASTER ASSISTANCE LEGAL ABOUT

NTSB Investigation

The NTSB has issued a preliminary report as part of its continuing investigation into the Sept. 4th crash of a Larson Christian Eagle-II in Seward, Nebraska.

Read More

Accident Dockets Safety Recommendations Aviation Accident Database Data & Stats Training Center

NTSB An Independent United States Federal Government Agency

Charged with determining the probable cause of transportation accidents and promoting transportation safety, and assisting victims of transportation accidents and their families. [more >](#)

Report an Aviation Accident Submit a TCAS Notification

MOST WANTED LIST Safety Improvements

Safety Management Systems

A Cessna 182, missing since Monday, was found in mountainous terrain in Stanley, ID. NTSB is investigating. 23 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

NTSB calls for ban on use of mobile phones by commercial drivers; cites need for improved median barriers #munfordville #munfordville http://t.co/VQPKj0i 2 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Chairman Hersman: "When you are at the wheel, driving safely should be your only focus." #munfordville 2 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Join the conversation

Board Meeting

On Tuesday, September 13th, the NTSB Board will meet to consider the final report on the Munfordville, KY, accident where a tractor-trailer struck a 15-passenger van head on. The event will be streamed live via webcast.

Safety Compass Blog

GA's Summer 2011 Safety Report Card

By East/Winter Labor Day marks the end of the busy summer flying season. This summer, my wife and I had several great - and, happily, uneventful - flights in our Bonanza. However, sadly, many of our fellow general aviation (GA) pilots did not fare so...

Featured Video

More Videos >

Resources

Press Releases Speeches/Testimony Databases Accident Dockets Training Center Safety Recommendations Strategic Plan, Performance & Accountability Reports & More

About Us

Organization Across the Board Office Locations Investigative Process Directions to Conference Center Board Members Contact Us Employment Web Policies &

NTSB.gov

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Publications

Accident Animations Annual Review of Aircraft Accident Data

OPEN.GOV

USA.gov



media relations

FACTUAL INFORMATION

- Information that doesn't change
- Often preliminary
- Without analysis
- We never speculate

media relations

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES

- Simultaneous investigations could mean multiple sources of information
- Sometimes criminal prosecution (Doswell and NYC)
- Vetting and coordinating release of investigation related information with other investigating agencies

contact information

NTSB Main Number: 202-314-6000

NTSB Public Affairs: 202-314-6100

peter.knudson@ntsb.gov

202-314-6219 (Direct)

24-hour Communications Center

202-314-6290 (for emergencies)



NTSB