

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: January 23, 1975

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Forwarded to:

Honorable Alexander P. Butterfield  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, D. C. 20591

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-75-1

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During its public hearing into the Pan American World Airways Boeing 707 accident at Pago Pago, the National Transportation Safety Board heard testimony from the Federal Aviation Administration which pertained generally to the certification of airports, and specifically to the certification of the airport at Pago Pago. This testimony revealed that no determination of the adequacy of medical services provided by airport emergency plans is required by the Federal Aviation Regulations when an airport is certificated.

14 CFR 139.55 provides that an applicant for an airport operating certificate must show that the airport "has an emergency plan sufficiently detailed to provide adequate guidance to all concerned." Such a plan is required to contain provisions for medical services. Although the regulations do not specify the minimum level of medical services required, further guidance is provided in Advisory Circular 150/5210.2, "Airport Emergency Medical Facilities and Services."

By contrast, 14 CFR 139 requires that an applicant for airport certification must show that the airport has a level of firefighting and rescue equipment appropriate for the various lengths of aircraft operated by air carrier users. The various aircraft lengths are grouped into five indices. Each index has corresponding specific equipment requirements. These requirements increase as length of aircraft increases. In addition, the regulations require certain firefighting equipment, certain firefighting training, and demonstrations of firefighting capabilities.

Because regulatory requirements for medical service provisions in airport emergency plans do not specify minimum standards, an airport could meet the current medical service provision of the emergency

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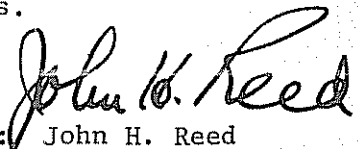
plan requirement if it provided only a first aid kit and a person qualified to administer first aid. Additionally, after an airport has been certificated, there are no provisions by which to increase the level of medical services required when an airport is recertificated for operations involving larger aircraft.

The Safety Board believes that regulations establishing minimum standards for medical services are needed to insure that provisions for adequate medical services are included in airport emergency plans. The Board realizes that airports should not be required to maintain elaborate medical facilities; however, contingency plans for securing the necessary medical assistance for mass casualties should be included in airport emergency plans. The Safety Board believes that a rationale similar to that used to set minimum fire and rescue equipment requirements should be applied to establishing medical service requirements for certificated airports.

Accordingly, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

Amend 14 CFR 139.55(b)(2) to prescribe minimum levels of medical service provisions similar to those provided for in Advisory Circular 150/5210.2 to insure that mass casualties resulting from an aircraft accident can be adequately handled and satisfactorily treated.

REED, Chairman, McADAMS, THAYER, BURGESS, and HALEY, Members, concurred in the above recommendations.

  
By: John H. Reed  
Chairman

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