

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: July 17, 1979

Forwarded to:

Honorable Langhorne M. Bond
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D.C. 20591

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-79-60

Rocky Mountain Airways, Inc., Flight 217, a DeHavilland DHC-6, crashed on a mountain about 8 nmi east-northeast of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, on December 4, 1978.

According to an official Federal Aviation Administration interpretation 1/ of 14 CFR 135.159 (new 135.165), the airplane was not properly equipped with navigation equipment. The official interpretation of the regulation had been provided at the Safety Board's request during the Board's earlier investigation of an accident involving a DeHavilland DHC-6-200, operating as Alaska Aeronautical Industries, Inc., Flight 302, on September 6, 1977. In this earlier case the airplane was also improperly equipped with navigation equipment.

Although the lack of proper equipment did not contribute to the cause of either accident, the Safety Board is concerned about this recurring noncompliance with the requirements for suitable navigation equipment. Evidently, FAA inspectors responsible for the surveillance of 14 CFR 135 operators are not uniformly assuring compliance with the regulation.

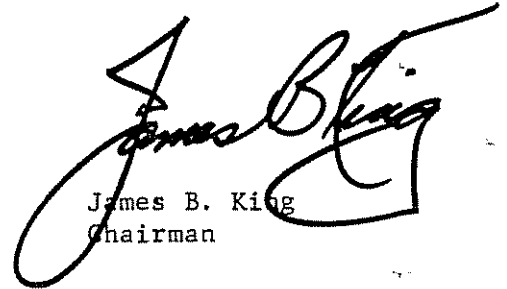
Accordingly, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

Issue an operations bulletin directing all operations inspectors who are responsible for the surveillance of 14 CFR 135 operators to assure that 14 CFR 135.159

1/ Letter from Acting Assistant Chief Counsel, Regulations and Enforcement Division, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, November 4, 1977.

(new 14 CFR 135.165) is complied with uniformly in accordance with the official legal interpretation of this regulation by the FAA. (Class II, Priority Action) (A-79-60)

KING, Chairman, DRIVER, Vice Chairman, McADAMS and GOLDMAN, Members, concurred in this recommendation.



James B. King
Chairman