

THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER



Friday, January 7, 2005

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

NTSB Results!!

Last year, the NTSB did a tremendous job “cleaning up the record” and implementing safety recommendations. In Fiscal Year 2004, the Board closed a total of 353 recommendations, with 277 closed with acceptable action. This is nearly double the number of recommendations closed with acceptable action during FY 2003. The number of open recommendations totaled 818 at the end of FY 2004, largely as a result of the NTSB's Safety-With-A-Team (SWAT) efforts.

Our successes also include increasing awareness of issues that affect safety across all modes. Modifying passenger weight estimates, which were addressed in the *Lady D* recommendation issued this week, mirrors a similar recommendation made as a result of the investigation into the crash of an Air Midwest Beech 1900D in Charlotte, NC. And, although aircraft icing is already on the NTSB's Most Wanted list, the high-profile crash of a business jet in Colorado prompted the Board to issue an NTSB Alert that highlighted this very important safety issue.

Ellen Engleman Conners

Board Makes Recommendation to Coast Guard/Alerts Pilots to Icing Issues

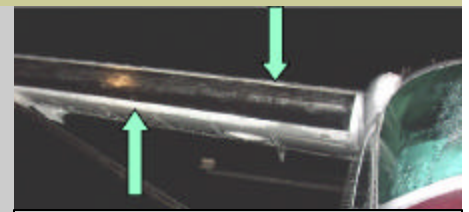
The NTSB issued an early safety recommendation to the U.S. Coast Guard regarding the March 6, 2004 capsizing of small passenger pontoon vessel *Lady D* near Baltimore, Maryland. Evidence indicates that at the time of the accident the *Lady D*'s total occupancy weight was approximately 700 pounds above the vessel's stability proof test weight allowance. The *Lady D*'s maximum capacity was based on 1960's weight assumptions of 140 pounds on average per person; however, current statistics show the average American adult weighs 165 pounds. The Board recommended that the Coast Guard revise their regulations to reflect this weight increase.



The *Lady D* after her recovery in Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

The *Lady D* accident investigation is being lead by **Thomas Roth-Roffy** from the NTSB's Office of Marine Safety.

A concern about aircraft icing prompted the NTSB to issue a recent alert to pilots. The Board has long been concerned about the insidious



Ice remains on the wing of an aircraft which experienced a hard landing after encountering in-flight icing.

nature of the effects of small amounts of ice accumulated on an airplane's upper wing surface. Airplane performance issues, including the possibility of upper wing ice contamination, are being investigated in two recent accidents, including the November 28, 2004 crash of a business jet in Montrose, Colorado. Research results have shown that fine particles of frost or ice, the size of a grain of table salt and distributed as sparsely as one per square centimeter over an airplane wing's upper surface can destroy enough lift to prevent that airplane from taking off.

Addressing aircraft icing is on the NTSB's Most Wanted list of safety improvements.

NTSB ALL HANDS MESSAGES

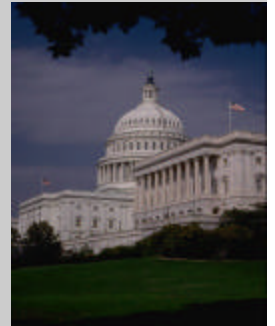


Academy Course for NTSB Employees

The NTSB Academy is offering a course on February 16-17, 2005 titled **Conducting Effective Technical Presentations**. This course, which is open only to NTSB employees, was developed to give students the practical tools and innovative methods to more confidently deliver effective presentations in technical subject areas to large audiences. Registration must be completed by February 7, 2005.

On the Hill...

The Office of Government and Industry Affairs was active in informing Members of Congress and Hill staff of the launch of an NTSB Go-team to the derailment of a freight train in Graniteville, South Carolina.



The 109th Congress convened on Tuesday, January 4th, with the swearing in of the returning Members of Congress as well as nine new Senators and 40 new Representatives.

NTSB Team Launches to Train Derailment



Cars from a Norfolk-Southern freight train accident which caused the release of chlorine gas.

12, which will be examining all aspects of the accident, including track maintenance, train crew records and human performance issues. Member **Debbie Hersman** is accompanying the team and serving as principal spokesperson for the on-scene investigation.

The FBI also sent their Evidence Response Team (ERT) to work with NTSB investigators at the scene. The FBI team recovered components of the switch assembly, which was taken to Washington for examination. Special thanks to the ERT for their assistance in this investigation.

The NTSB launched a Go-team to the derailment of a Norfolk-Southern freight train on January 6th in Graniteville, South Carolina. The train derailed at a switch near a rail siding and collided with a second parked locomotive, causing the derailment of 14 of the 42 cars. Nine people were killed and an unknown number were injured when at least one tank car carrying chlorine ruptured during the accident. The toxic gas forced the evacuation of 5400 residents and is expected to displace at least 300 residents for several days.

Jim Southworth from the NTSB's Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations is the Investigator-in-Charge of the team of



The accident scene in Graniteville, SC.
Photos courtesy of the Augusta Chronicle.