



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

A-71-3

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20591

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

January 20, 1971

Honorable John H. Shaffer  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, D. C. 20590

Dear Mr. Shaffer:

We are currently investigating the accident involving the Capitol International Airways McDonnell-Douglas DC-8-63F, which occurred during an attempted takeoff from Anchorage, Alaska, on November 27, 1970.

The facts thus far developed provide evidence that the aircraft failed to accelerate at a normal rate during the takeoff roll. Although lack of proper rotation of the main landing gear wheels on an icy runway has been established as a prime factor in slow acceleration of the aircraft, the mechanism initiating this condition has as yet not been isolated or identified. Investigation in this area is continuing.

Regardless of the cause for the slow acceleration of the airplane, we feel that a timely takeoff abort might have been initiated and effected in this case if the crew had been able to determine the acceleration rate of the airplane under the given operating conditions. We feel that procedures enabling flightcrews to make this evaluation must be developed and furnished to all users.

In view of the facts, conditions, and circumstances of this accident, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that:

The Federal Aviation Administration determine and implement takeoff procedures that will provide the flightcrew with time or distance reference to enable him to make an appropriate judgement with regard to the airplane's acceleration rate to the  $V_1$  speed, particularly for critical length runways, and for runway surface conditions that may impede acceleration.

Mr. John H. Shaffer (2)

January 20, 1971

Members of our Bureau of Aviation Safety staff will be available for consultation in this matter if desired.

In accordance with established procedures, this letter will be placed in our public docket at the end of the five working-day period commencing the day after the date of this letter. It is understood, therefore, that there will be no public dissemination of this letter until that time.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John H. Reed". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

John H. Reed  
Chairman