

## THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER



Friday, August 6, 2004

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It's been a very busy week for the NTSB -- regrettably. The NTSB launched on nine aviation accidents and have two more in which we are participating. Additionally, three highway and one marine accident occurred, stretching the NTSB resources across six states. Our NTSB investigators are our first line of offense for ultimate safety issues. Many of them are on-call every other week, ready to launch and ready to leave their homes at a moment's notice. It's something we try not to take for granted and want to thank each of them -- and their families -- for their constant and daily commitment to safety.

In addition, some of the more unknown aspects of the NTSB's role include the responsibilities of both the Public Affairs team members as well as the Transportation Disaster Assistance team. They, too, are on call and ready to support our safety investigations, taking calls throughout the night and day to help ensure that constant and accurate information is shared. Again special thanks to all who serve on the NTSB team.

*Ellen Engleman Conners*

### Board Meets on Market Accident and Child Seats on Aircraft



The 1992 Buick LeSabre involved in the accident at the Santa Monica Farmer's Market

The National Transportation Safety Board met on August 3rd in its Washington, DC Headquarters to deliberate on two items. In the first, the Board determined that the probable cause of an accident in Santa Monica, California was unintended acceleration by the driver. In the July 16, 2003 accident, an 86-year-old man, driving a 1992 Buick LeSabre, hit a stopped car, continued through an intersection and drove through a farmers' market, striking pedestrians and vendors' displays before coming to a stop. The accident resulted in 10 fatalities and 63 injuries. Contributing to the severity of the accident was the lack of a barrier system to protect pedestrians. The Safety Board recommended that the City of Santa Monica install a rigid barrier system as a physical barrier to errant vehicles.

The second item at the meeting discussed the disposition of a 1995 safety recommendation to the FAA. As a result of the 1994 crash of a USAir DC-9, the Board recommended that child seats be required on commercial aircraft. Although progress had been seen on this issue in the past, based on new information, the Board reclassified the recommendation as "Open - Unacceptable Action." The Board is requesting that further studies be done on the possibility of unintended consequences from this recommendation, while still encouraging educational campaigns. Requiring child restraints on aircraft has been on the NTSB Most Wanted List since 1999, and it was voted to keep this item on the list. In addition, the NTSB's Safety-With-A-Team (SWAT) will continue to meet with the FAA to find the best solution for the implementation of this recommendation.

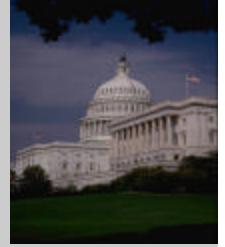
## NTSB ALL HANDS MESSAGES



There is new information about the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) insurance program. The FSAFEDS *Juke Box* has details about eligible and ineligible medical expenses under FSAFEDS. In addition, an updated FAQ has answers to a wider range of subjects and with more detail. More information can be found on the FSAFEDS web site at [www.FSAFEDS.com](http://www.FSAFEDS.com), or you can contact , **Pam Goins** at X6236, or by email at [goinsp@ntsb.gov](mailto:goinsp@ntsb.gov).

### On the Hill...

This week, the Office of Government and Industry Affairs sent information to the Hill on the results of the August 3rd Board Meeting and the plans for a follow-up meeting with the FAA on the issue of child restraints on aircraft. In addition, briefings were conducted on a series of general aviation accidents that occurred within a 24-hour period in Texas.



## NTSB Investigates Fifteen Accidents This Week

NTSB investigators launched to a series of accidents this week. The Office of Aviation Safety launched on nine aircraft accidents and investigated two more. These included:

- A Cessna 172 which crashed into the Tennessee River near Waterloo, AL, killing the pilot.
- An accident near Lookout, MO involving a Piper PA-32 in which four of the five aboard were killed.
- Four accidents in Texas that killed 12. These included the crash of a Piper Aerostar into a house in Austin, TX that killed six.
- A mosquito control helicopter accident in Bunnell, FL.
- A Port Angeles, WA crash of a Cessna 182 that killed one and seriously injured two.



The scene of an accident in Austin, TX that killed six.

The Office of Marine Safety is cooperating with the US Coast Guard to investigate the grounding of a cruise ship in the Aleutian Islands in Alaska. The accident forced 126 passengers to abandon the vessel and evacuate to Dutch Harbor.

The Office of Highway Safety initiated investigations into several highway accidents, including the August 6th crash of a Greyhound bus near Jackson, TN that killed three.

## Interagency Outreach Efforts Continue

On August 4th, NTSB personnel participated in a Transportation Accident Advance Team (TAAT) project meeting in New York City with representatives from the Office of Emergency Management, the New York Port Authority, Police Department, Fire Department and the Metropolitan Transit Authority. The meeting discussed the concept of training 6-10 individuals from each agency who would interface with NTSB personnel to better coordinate efforts during the on-scene portion of an accident investigation. **Erik Grosopf** (TDA), **Ken Suydam** (HS) and Associate Managing Director **Jim Arena** represented the NTSB at the meeting. Members of TAAT will receive specialized training from the NTSB, which is scheduled to take place in NYC. The NTSB Academy is assisting in curriculum development, with input by the agencies involved. New York City is the pilot for this project, with further cities expected to be added in the beginning of 2005.