



Friday, August 27, 2004

THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

This week the NTSB celebrated two important events: The PFD Forum at the NTSB Academy, and the one-year success of our SWAT—Safety-With-A-Team—meetings.

These two events effectively bookend our work at the NTSB. The PFD Forum allowed us to discuss, with government, industry and the boating public, the safety issues surrounding the use of PFDs. While there are no state laws mandating the use of PFDs by adults, the evidence clearly shows that they save lives. An event like the PFD Forum brings a more complete set of information to the table, and allows the discourse to continue with better facts, science and data.

The one-year anniversary of SWAT showcases our mission at the NTSB. The accident investigations we conduct are the work we do, but the recommendations we make are the product that saves lives. Closing these recommendations means that the people using our transportation systems will be safer, and our SWAT team has helped that become a reality.

Thank you to the NTSB staff who made the PFD Forum and the first year of SWAT so successful.

Ellen Engleman Conners

NTSB Celebrates One Year of SWAT Success



Chairman Engleman Conners thanks SWAT participants at the first anniversary celebration.

The NTSB and its partners in safety celebrated one year of Safety-With-A-Team (SWAT) meetings on August 24th at the NTSB's Headquarters in Washington. The SWAT concept was developed in June 2003 to address safety recommendations that had remained unresolved. The SWAT concept involves face-to-face meetings with NTSB staff and staff from other federal agencies and industry, to discuss the initial intent, progress and possible actions to address these recommendations. In the last year, 28 SWAT meetings have been held between NTSB staff and representatives from the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the Research and Special Programs Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, the Passenger

Vessel Association, the Association of American Railroads, the American Bus Association, Ford Motor Company, the Federal Railroad Administration and the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials. So far, Safety-With-A-Team meetings have addressed 318 open recommendations and resulted in 49 being closed, with 73 more proposed to be closed.

Since the inception of the SWAT program, the NTSB has closed 377 recommendations, with 177 new recommendations issued during that time. There are currently 813 recommendations classified as open.



Some of the estimated 80 SWAT members who joined in the celebration.

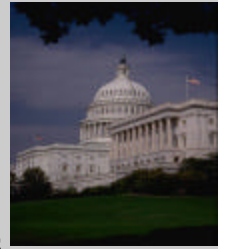
NTSB ALL HANDS MESSAGES



L'Enfant Plaza will be conducting drills over the next few months to test both fire alarms and shelter-in-place equipment and procedures. Please review the building evacuation procedures and follow public address system instructions for the specific drill. Building security information can be found at: http://inside/services/adminserv/bldg_security.htm.

On the Hill...

The Office of Government and Industry Affairs (GIA) continues to work with the CFO's office on the NTSB's budget request for Fiscal Year 2006. The request will be submitted concurrently to the Office of Management and Budget and Congress on September 7, 2004.



PFD Forum Successfully Discusses Safety



Susan Balistreri discusses mandatory PFD wear as part of the first panel of the PFD Forum.

The NTSB Academy in Ashburn, VA was host to the Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) Forum on August 25th. The forum invited discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of mandatory PFD use on recreational boats. NTSB Chairman Engleman Connors and Vice Chairman Mark Rosenker made opening remarks to the 86 attendees. NTSB Safety Studies and Statistical Analysis Chief **Dr. Deborah Bruce** moderated the four panels and 15 presenters, who covered topics ranging from accident statistics in recreational boating to PFD technology and wearability. Additional NTSB technical staff for the forum consisted of **Dr. Bruce Coury**, **Bill Gossard** and **Ted White**.

A 1993 Board study on recreational boating safety found that 85 percent of drowning victims were not using PFDs. This prompted the Board to ask the States to require PFD use for children under age 13. There is currently no state law requiring adult boaters to wear personal flotation devices, but the Coast Guard estimates that 416 people could have been saved last year if they had been wearing life jackets.

Enhancing recreational boating safety has been on the NTSB Most Wanted list of safety recommendation since the list was developed in 1990.

Board to Meet on Bridge Collapse in Oklahoma

The National Transportation Safety Board will hold a public Board Meeting on Tuesday, August 31, 2004 in its Washington, DC Headquarters to discuss the final report on a fatal bridge collapse in Webbers Falls, Oklahoma. The May 26, 2002 accident occurred as the towboat Robert Y. Love, pushing two empty tank barges, was traveling northbound on the Arkansas River. As the tow approached the Interstate 40 highway bridge, it veered off course and rammed a pier, west of the navigation channel. The impact collapsed a 503-foot section of the bridge, which fell into the river and onto the barges below. Highway traffic continued to drive into the void the bridged created by the collapsed spans. By the time traffic stopped, eight passenger vehicles and three tractor-trailer combinations had fallen into the river or onto the collapsed portion of the bridge. The accident resulted in 14 fatalities and five injuries.

The Board meeting will be available via webcast on the Board's website at www.nts.gov.