

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
 WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: August 31, 1981

Forwarded to:

Honorable J. Lynn Helms
 Administrator
 Federal Aviation Administration
 800 Independence Avenue, S.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20591

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-81-94 and -95

About 1630 c.s.t. on January 30, 1980, a Rockwell Aero Commander 690A, XB-AEA, crashed 9 miles south of the Will Rogers Airport, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The aircraft was en route from Dallas, Texas, to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan. At 1338 c.s.t., a specialist at the Fort Worth Flight Service Station (FSS) Fort Worth, Texas, briefed the pilot. Subsequent investigation by the Safety Board revealed that the weather briefing the pilot received was not performed in accordance with Flight Services Handbook 7110.10. During the briefing, the specialist did not inform the pilot of a National Weather Service (NWS) forecast for significant icing in Oklahoma.

On February 12, 1980, Beech Baron N1ZW crashed about 1905 e.s.t. while attempting an instrument landing system (ILS) approach to runway 23 at Saranac Lake, New York. The aircraft was on an IFR flight plan from Teterboro, New Jersey, to Saranac Lake, New York. About 1531 e.s.t., the pilot of N1ZW called a specialist at the Teterboro FSS and requested a weather briefing. Investigation by the Safety Board revealed that the weather briefing provided to the pilot by the specialist was not performed in accordance with the Flight Services Handbook. During the weather briefing, the pilot did not receive NWS forecasts for occasional moderate turbulence and light to occasionally moderate icing that were pertinent to the route of flight of N1ZW.

In addition to the two accidents cited above, the Safety Board has investigated four other accidents in 1980 ^{1/} in which the weather briefing provided to the pilot by the FSS specialist was not performed in accordance with the Flight Services Handbook. Again, noncompliance with the procedures in the Handbook resulted in the omission of critical weather information during the briefing. Since the safety of

^{1/} Beech Aircraft Bonanza (BE-35), N621T, February 14, 1980, Barksdale, Texas - Fort Worth, Texas FSS. Cessna Aircraft (C-172), N3912F, May 10, 1980, Napanee, Indiana - South Bend, Indiana FSS. Grumman American (AA5B), N28252, October 16, 1980, Madill, Oklahoma - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma FSS. Beech Aircraft Baron (BE-55), N171W, October 29, 1980, Canisteo, New York - Buffalo, New York FSS.

flight depends on the availability of critical weather information to the pilot, the Safety Board believes that the FAA must take steps to ensure that FSS personnel comply with the weather briefing procedures in Flight Services Handbook 7110.10. 2/

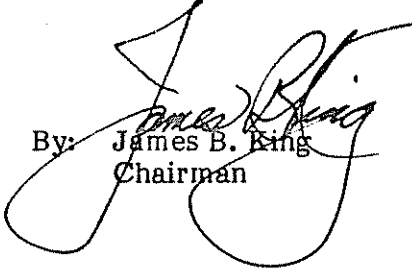
The FAA is responsible for monitoring the quality and content of weather briefings. One method, which is considered the most efficient, is the review of audio-recorded weather briefings at FSS's. However, only about 40 percent of the FSS's have this capability. The Safety Board believes that by expanding the audio-recording capability to all FSS's the monitoring process will be enhanced and consequently the quality and content of weather briefings provided by FSS personnel will be improved.

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

Audio-record all weather briefings provided by FSS personnel and retain such records for a reasonable period of time. (Class II, Priority Action) (A-81-4)

Take steps to ensure that all FSS personnel who provide weather briefings comply with the weather briefing procedures published in Flight Services Handbook 7110.10. (Class II, Priority Action) (A-81-95)

KING, Chairman, DRIVER, Vice Chairman, and GOLDMAN and BURSLEY, Members, concurred in these recommendations. McADAMS, Member, did not participate.

By: 
James B. King
Chairman

2/ For more information read "Special Investigation Report: Flight Service Station Weather Briefing Inadequacies." (NTSB-SIR-81-3.)