

A-6914

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20591

NOV 1 1968

Mr. David D. Thomas
Acting Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
Department of Transportation
Washington, D. C. 20590

Dear Mr. Thomas:

On May 23, 1968, a Piper PA-32, N4049R, operated by Travelair Taxi, Inc., on a scheduled air taxi flight crashed and burned shortly after takeoff from Cleveland Hopkins Airport, Cleveland, Ohio, as a result of a complete engine failure. Fortunately, in this case, neither the pilot nor his passenger were seriously injured; however, such instances are potentially hazardous both to the aircraft occupants and persons on the ground.

The Safety Board's investigation disclosed that the engine failure was caused by the main fuel line hose end backing out of its swedged fitting at the firewall, most probably as a result of a manufacturing defect, i.e., insufficient insertion of the hose end in the firewall swedged fitting. The hose fitting assembly (P/N 63901-42) is a TSO manufactured item. While on the surface this may appear to be an isolated case, the Board feels that certain hitherto unexplained in-flight fires and explosions which have gone undetermined as to cause could, at least in some cases, have been similarly caused. In view of the potential inflight fire and engine failure hazards associated with fuel and/or oil system hose assembly failures, the Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration reexamine quality control inspection requirements and the procedures now in effect by the manufacturers of these hose assemblies as well as requirements for quality control inspection given by the aircraft manufacturer on receipt of such components.

Our investigators have discussed this proposed action with personnel from your Flight Standards Service who have also viewed the subject hose assembly. Our engineering staff is available to provide you with any further information or assistance as desired.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph J. O'Connell, Jr.
Chairman