

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: February 26, 1980

Forwarded to:

Honorable Langhorne M. Bond
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D.C. 20591

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-80-15

On January 26, 1979, N7671Q, a Cessna 310Q, on a nonscheduled air taxi flight, made a hard landing at Beckley, West Virginia, which injured two passengers and damaged the airplane substantially.

The pilot-in-command was flying the light twin-engine airplane from the right seat. In the enclosed accident brief relative to this accident, this fact is stated as a significant "remark." While the pilot of the flight held instructor and instrument flight instructor certificates, he stated that he was not engaged in flight instruction from the right seat at the time of the accident; however, the left front seat was occupied by a pilot with only a single-engine rating. During the course of the investigation, a potential safety problem was identified which could contribute to similar accidents.

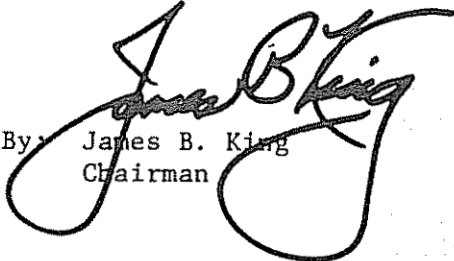
The Cessna 310Q is certificated for single-pilot operation. The flight instruments are positioned on the left side of the instrument panel. The National Transportation Safety Board's investigation disclosed that the flight instruments are difficult to see from the right front seat and that this may be true in other light twin-engine aircraft. Nevertheless, the regulations in 14 CFR Part 135 do not prohibit the pilot-in-command from occupying the right seat. The Safety Board believes that aircraft with similarly configured instruments should not be flown from the right seat by the pilot-in-command for 14 CFR Part 135 operations. 1/

1/ Although the instructor pilot in the accident aircraft was flying with a certificate of demonstrated ability because he had lost the sight of one eye, the recommendation is based on the fact that our investigation determined that the flight instruments were not adequately visible from the right seat to a person with normal vision.

As a result of its investigation, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

Require that the pilot-in-command of a Part 135 air taxi or commuter air carrier flight occupy a seat in the pilot compartment which affords him the most direct view of the basic flight and navigation instruments with a minimal deviation from his normal position and line of sight when he is looking forward along the flightpath.
(Class II, Priority Action) (A-80-15)

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


By: James B. King
Chairman