

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: August 24, 1972

Adopted by the NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
at its office in Washington, D. C.
on the 26th day of July 1972

FORWARDED TO:)
Mr. N. J. O'Connell)
President)
Allied Pilots Association)
P. O. Box 5524)
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SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS A-72-125 & 126

Over the past several years, there have been a significant number of instances in which, subsequent to a landing after a reportable occurrence or an incident, the flightcrew has failed to halt the operation of the cockpit voice recorder (CVR), thus causing the erasure of all recording pertinent to the occurrence. As a result, much significant information with valuable accident-prevention potential has been lost.

It should be noted that many of the instances where this loss of data occurred were due to the restoration of electrical power after the flightcrew had left the aircraft without first having deactivated the electrical circuit powering the CVR.

The National Transportation Safety Board recognizes that there are occasions wherein the crew may not be able to make a prompt assessment concerning the necessity for immediate notification of the Safety Board under Part 430 if its regulations and the concomitant requirement for the preservation of recorded information as prescribed by Part 121 (section 121.359(e)) of the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR). In such cases it would appear that the crew should stop the CVR, thereby preserving the record against erasure, until a more accurate determination can be made regarding the scope and extent of the occurrence.

We are sure that you and your members are as interested as we are in determining all of the facts, conditions, and circumstances surrounding accidents and incidents of a less-than-catastrophic nature as well as those unfortunate occurrences with more dire results. It is with the knowledge gained from the relatively less serious occurrences that we may learn how to prevent tragedies from taking place. Usually, more of this type of insight can be gained when the information from the CVR is

Mr. N. J. O'Connell (2)

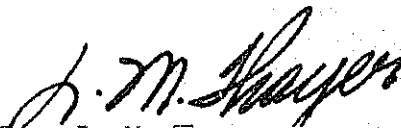
preserved. Accordingly, concurrent with this letter, we are transmitting to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration a recommendation that the language of FAR 121.359(e) be amended to delineate the responsibility of the pilot-in-command for ensuring the preservation of CVR recordings following an occurrence likely to require immediate notification of the Safety Board.

In consonance with the foregoing, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Allied Pilots Association:

1. Remind its members of the provisions of FAR 121.359(e) pertaining to the preservation of recorded information.
2. Urge its members to ensure that after a landing or a ground occurrence where immediate notification of the Safety Board may be required, the cockpit voice recorder be stopped by circuit breaker activation, until an accurate determination can be made relative to the aforementioned notification.

These recommendations will be released to the public on the issue date shown above. No public dissemination of the contents of this document should be made prior to that date.

Reed, Chairman, McAdams, Thayer, Burgess, and Haley, Members, concurred in the above recommendations.


By: L. M. Thayer
Acting Chairman