

There is little doubt that the municipal dump located adjacent to the airport property attracts birds which are a serious hazard to aircraft. Local authorities did not close the dump by August 1972, as previously planned. The airport was returned to DeKalb County under Public Law 289 in 1960, and Federal funds were used for subsequent airport improvements in exchange for binding commitments designed to assure that the public interest would be served. In following-up on the compliance requirements for airports developed or improved with Federal funds, the FAA did not take adequate measures, in accordance with existing statutes, to assure that the hazard was removed from the vicinity of the airport.

The Board is concerned because responsible authorities had not taken due cognizance of the bird hazards to aircraft at the DeKalb-Peachtree Airport. The seriousness of the hazard is exemplified in the Board's files which contain a number of reports of accidents, some catastrophic in nature, that resulted from bird/airplane collisions. Many airports are confronted with perennial or seasonal bird problems, and all such airports should employ methods to minimize the hazard. Public and private studies have shown that the elimination of food and water sources in the vicinity of airports is the most effective means of combating the bird hazard. Open garbage dumps attract birds, and the location of these facilities around airports is not compatible with normal airport operations.

PROBABLE CAUSE

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of this accident was the loss of engine thrust during takeoff due to ingestion of birds by the engines, resulting in loss of control of the airplane. The Federal Aviation Administration and the Airport Authority were aware of the bird hazard at the airport; however, contrary to previous commitments, the airport management did not take positive action to remove the bird hazard from the airport environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is aware of the court action taken by the FAA subsequent to the accident of February 6, 1973, at the DeKalb-Peachtree Airport in Atlanta, Georgia. However, in view of the facts developed by the investigation of this accident the Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

1. Develop and implement a procedure for more stringent and continued surveillance of all facilities subject to the provisions of the "Airports & Airways Development Act" and impose timely sanctions against operators of facilities, which receive Federal aid and do not fully comply with the requirements imposed upon them by the provisions of this Act. (Recommendation No. A-73-36)

2. Disseminate by the widest possible distribution of FAA Advisory Circular 150/5200-3A dated March 2, 1972, subject "Bird Hazards to Aircraft," to ensure that all airport operators, air carriers, air taxi operators, flying schools, fixed-base operators, and airline transport, commercial, and private pilots, and flight instructors are fully aware of the hazards to aviation associated with bird strikes. (Recommendation No. A-73-37)

The Safety Board further recommends that the following organizations:

3. Disseminate the contents of this report in their trade publications to their members to ensure that the possible consequences of bird hazards to aircraft are fully known to all who may be in a position to control this hazard: National Association of State Aviation Officials, American Association of Airport Executives, Airport Operators Council International, Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association, Air Transport Association of America, Air Line Pilots Association, Allied Pilots Association, National Air Carrier Association, National Air Transportation Conferences, National Business Aircraft Association, and National Pilots Association. (Recommendation No. A-73-38)

BY THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

/s/ JOHN H. REED
Chairman

/s/ LOUIS M. THAYER
Member

/s/ ISABEL A. BURGESS
Member

/s/ WILLIAM R. HALEY
Member

Francis H. McAdams, Member, was not present and did not participate in the adoption of this report

May 30, 1973.