

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: December 4, 1974

Forwarded to:

Honorable Alexander P. Butterfield
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D. C. 20591

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-74-102 thru 103

On January 16, 1974, a Trans World Airlines, Inc., B-707 was involved in an accident at Los Angeles, California. The National Transportation Safety Board's investigation of the accident disclosed an unsafe condition which should be corrected.

During the crash sequence, the nosewheel collapsed, and the pilot compartment door jammed when the floor beneath the door became deformed. The crewmembers were unable to use the door to the cabin, so they exited through the sliding windows in the cockpit. After the accident, the flight engineer stated, "I tried to kick the door open, and also put my shoulder to the door...breathing was getting painful. The first officer went out his window, and I followed him." Under slightly different circumstances, for example, had the fire and smoke spread more rapidly, one or more of the cockpit crewmembers could have been killed.

The supporting structure beneath the floor under the pilot compartment door was distorted upward when the nosewheel folded aft and up. Failure of the nosewheel is not uncommon during crash landings or when an aircraft leaves a hard surface. The Safety Board is aware of four similar air carrier accidents in which the pilot compartment door jammed because the floor became deformed. However, none of the crewmembers were killed or seriously injured as a result of the jammed doors because they were able to exit through the cockpit windows.

Although the Federal Aviation Regulations require that cockpit crewmembers have alternate emergency exits available in

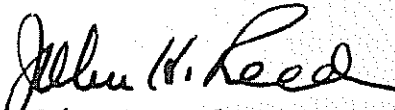
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the cockpit, the Safety Board is concerned that pilot compartment doors may become jammed in an accident since the cockpit crewmembers have essential duties to perform in the cabin during emergency evacuations. If the cockpit crewmembers are unable to enter the cabin, the safety of the passengers could be jeopardized. Therefore, we believe that every effort should be made to prevent a jammed pilot compartment door from blocking access to the cabin.

In view of the above, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

1. Amend 14 CFR 25.772 to require that pilot compartment doors be designed to provide a means for the cockpit crew to egress through the doorway to the cabin, even if the door becomes jammed.
2. Amend 14 CFR 121.313 to require that, after a reasonable date, a means be provided for the cockpit crew to exit through the pilot compartment door to the cabin even if the door becomes jammed.

REED, Chairman, McADAMS, THAYER, BURGESS, and HALEY, Members, concurred in the above recommendations.


By: John H. Reed
Chairman

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