

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.**

For Release: 6:30 p.m. December 1, 1974

ISSUED: December 1, 1974

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Forwarded to:

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

} SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

} A-74-104  
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On January 31, 1974, Pan American Flight 806, a B-707-321B(a), crashed near Pago Pago International Airport, American Samoa. The National Transportation Safety Board's investigation of the accident disclosed a situation which warrants a change in a Federal Aviation Regulation to improve the safety of air carrier operations.

For medical reasons, the captain of Flight 806 had not been on flying status from September 5, 1973, until January 15, 1974. After he had recuperated, he accomplished the prescribed Pan American A-Phase recurrent training (simulator and ground school). Finally, he requalified in the B-707 by making three takeoffs and three landings as required by 14 CFR 124.439. The Safety Board notes that a pilot can be off flying status for up to 6 months and, if his line check and proficiency checks are still current, he can be returned to flying duty by accomplishing only the required takeoffs and landings.

Part 121.439 does not require a pilot returning to flying duty to perform the takeoffs and landings with a check airman, even though a single requalifying flight may represent the only training a pilot receives before going back to flying duty. The same may be true when a pilot maintains qualification on two aircraft and must accomplish the required takeoffs and landings to remain qualified or become requalified. The Safety Board believes that when a pilot accomplishes the recent experience requirements of 14 CFR 121.439, a check airman should be required to observe him and to certify that he is qualified and proficient to return to flying duty. The check airman should require the performance of any maneuvers he believes necessary to certify proficiency.

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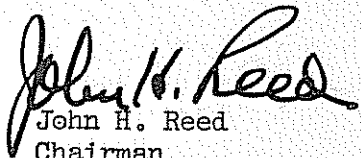
Honorable Alexander P. Butterfield

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Accordingly, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

Amend 14 CFR 121.439 to require that a check airman (1) observe a pilot as he performs the three takeoffs and three landings specified for recent experience, and (2) certify that the pilot is qualified and proficient to return to his assigned status. In addition, the check airman should require a pilot to perform any maneuvers necessary to certify performance.

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

By:   
John H. Reed  
Chairman

THIS RECOMMENDATION WILL BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC ON THE ISSUE DATE SHOWN ABOVE. NO PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE MADE BEFORE THAT DATE.