

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

FOR RELEASE: 6:30 A.M., E.D.S.T., MAR. 4, 1975

ISSUED: March 4, 1975

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

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-75-10

On September 1, 1974, a Gates Learjet, Model 25B, crashed near Denver, Colorado. The aircraft was operating as a training flight. Based on the National Transportation Safety Board's investigation, including information from the cockpit voice recorder and physical evidence of the position of the horizontal stabilizer actuator jackscrew, we believe that the instructor pilot was demonstrating runaway nosedown trim.

The manufacturer's procedure for recovering from runaway nosedown stabilizer trim requires that the pilot reach forward and turn off the trim cutoff switch, which is located on the center instrument panel. However, when the aircraft is in full nosedown trim at high airspeeds, the pilot may have to hold 80 pounds aft control force to maintain level flight. In this accident, the evidence indicates that control of the aircraft was not maintained, and the efforts of both pilots were not sufficient to arrest the steep descent which resulted.

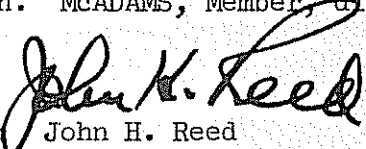
While aspects of this accident may be peculiar to flight training procedures, it might not have occurred had the trim cutoff switch been located on the control wheels, where a quick manipulation of a thumb or finger could have arrested the runaway action. We understand that such an installation is standard on certain other Learjet models.

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

Honorable Alexander P. Butterfield - 2 -

Issue an Airworthiness Directive to relocate the trim cutoff switch on the Learjet Model 25B to a more accessible position, so that during manipulation neither pilot will have to relinquish control forces which are necessary to arrest runaway trim.

REED, Chairman, THAYER, BURGESS, and HALEY, Members of the Board, concurred in the above recommendation. McADAMS, Member, dissented.

  
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 PRIOR TO THAT DATE.