

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: July 11, 1977

-----  
Forwarded to:

Honorable Langhorne M. Bond  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, D. C. 20591

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-77-49 and 50

The National Transportation Safety Board's investigation of a Dassault Falcon Jet accident at Naples, Florida, on November 12, 1976, disclosed a serious defect in the seatbelt attachment fittings of both pilots' seats. The Board believes that this defect can hinder survivability of pilots.

In this accident, the pilot experienced lateral decelerative loads and was ejected from his seatbelt and his shoulder harness when the right seatbelt fitting deformed and the retaining pin separated from the fitting. He struck numerous cockpit surfaces and sustained blunt trauma to the abdomen and a lacerated right elbow. The copilot's right seatbelt fitting failed similarly, but fortunately, the seatbelt did not slip free of the retaining pin and he remained in his seat. The copilot was not wearing his shoulder harness.

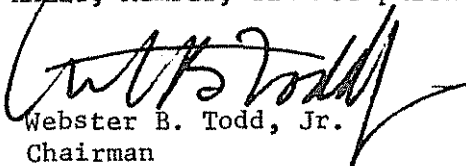
According to Dassault International (USA), Inc., the seatbelt fitting's retaining pin must be an "oxygen/argon or argon controlled atmosphere weld." Examination of both right-hand fittings by the Board's laboratory disclosed that the retaining pins had been brazed to the fittings, rather than oxygen/argon welded in accordance with Dassault's recommended procedures. Therefore, the Board believes that the manufacturing and quality control practices of the seat subcontractor must be reviewed.

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

Issue an Airworthiness Directive to inspect the seatbelt fittings on all Dassault pilot seats for compliance with Dassault's manufacturing procedures and to replace those fittings which are found to be defective. (Class I - Urgent Followup) (A-77-49)

Review the manufacture and quality-control practices of these pilot seats to insure that they are in accordance with Dassault procedures and FAA criteria. (Class II - Priority Followup) (A-77-50)

TODD, Chairman, BAILEY, Vice Chairman, McADAMS and HOGUE, Members, concurred in the above recommendations. HALEY, Member, did not participate.

By:  Webster B. Todd, Jr.  
Chairman