

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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(202) 426-8787

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Forwarded to:

Honorable John L. McLucas
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D. C. 20591

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-77-12 and 13

It has come to the attention of the National Transportation Safety Board that increasing numbers of noncertificated airports in the 48 contiguous states are receiving passenger service by commuter air carriers. Civil Aeronautics Board statistics indicate that the number of passengers carried by commuter air carriers has risen from about 4 million in fiscal year 1970 to well over 7 million in fiscal year 1975. It may be deduced also from these statistics that the number of noncertificated airports serving commuter air carriers with passenger service only may be as high as 150. Many of these airports are general aviation airports and some serve more flights each day than do certificated airports with the lower traffic levels.

The Safety Board's accident investigation experience has shown that many noncertificated airports have either rudimentary crash/fire/rescue (CFR) capabilities or are entirely dependent on firefighting equipment from nearby communities. Often, a community firefighting force is composed of volunteer personnel, who may not be trained in the CFR techniques associated with aircraft accidents. Thus, the Safety Board is concerned that commuter air carrier passengers are not being protected adequately.

While the Safety Board is aware that the Federal Aviation Administration is studying the feasibility of certificating airports serving the commuter air carrier industry (thereby improving the CFR capability of such airports) interim measures must be taken to raise the current level of safety for commuter air carrier passengers. The Safety Board believes that such measures should include appropriate training for

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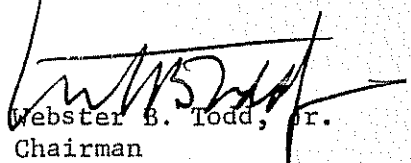
firefighting personnel in CFR techniques associated with aircraft accidents. Advisory Circular (AC) 139.49-1, and the 150/5210 series Advisory Circulars contain excellent material for the formulation of a training curriculum for firefighting personnel responsible for safety at noncertificated airports.

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

Formulate, in cooperation with the National Fire Protection Association, a training program for use by local fire departments as a minimum standard for firefighting personnel involved in CFR activities at noncertificated airports. (A-77-12) (Class II, Priority followup)

Disseminate the training program, in coordination with the Commuter Airlines Association of America, the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration, and the American Association of Airport Executives, to State and local governments and airport operators and urge them to adopt it in the interest of passenger safety. (A-77-13) (Class II, Priority followup)

TODD, Chairman, BAILEY, Vice Chairman, McADAMS, HOGUE, and HALEY, Members, concurred in the above recommendations.

By:  Webster B. Todd, Jr.
Chairman

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