

January 7, 2021

The Honorable Stephen Dickson  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's December 16, 2020, report *Provide Inspectors with Automatic Notification of Flight Instructors with Substandard Student Pass Rates, NTSB/ASR-20-06*. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number (for example, A-20-40 through -42). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.



**Executive Secretariat-crb**  
Executive Secretariat  
Office of the Managing Director  
National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20594

Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)



# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Office of the Chairman

January 7, 2021

The Honorable Stephen Dickson  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Dickson:

This letter provides information about the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) December 16, 2020, report *Provide Inspectors with Automatic Notification of Flight Instructors with Substandard Student Pass Rates*, NTSB/ASR-20-06. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Lack of a system to automatically notify Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspectors of flight instructors with substandard student pass rates
- Need for better FAA inspector guidance regarding the circumstances necessitating surveillance of a flight instructor

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendations to the Federal Aviation Administration. Additional information regarding these recommendations can be found in the noted sections of the report.

- Develop a system to automatically notify your inspectors of those flight instructors (within each inspector's geographic area of responsibility) whose student pass rate in the Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem has become substandard so that the inspectors can perform additional surveillance according to the guidance in Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System, volume 6, chapter 1, section 5, "Surveillance of a Certificated Flight Instructor." (A-20-40)
- Until the system proposed in Safety Recommendation A-20-40 is implemented, direct your inspectors to (1) review the Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem on an ongoing basis to identify those flight instructors (within each inspector's geographic area of responsibility) with a substandard student pass rate and (2) provide additional surveillance of those instructors according to the guidance in Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System, volume 6, chapter 1, section 5, "Surveillance of a Certificated Flight Instructor." (A-20-41)

- Revise Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System, volume 6, chapter 1, section 5, “Surveillance of a Certificated Flight Instructor,” to include flight instructors with a substandard student pass rate as one of the criteria necessitating additional surveillance of a flight instructor. (A-20-42)

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number (Safety Recommendation(s), A-20-40 through -42. We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman