



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: May 13, 2014

In reply refer to: A-14-028 through -031

Mr. Rod Thomas
President
National Agricultural Aviation Research &
Education Foundation
1440 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3403

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. The NTSB determines the probable cause of the accidents and issues safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, the NTSB carries out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinates the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters. We are providing the following information to urge the National Agricultural Aviation Research & Education Foundation (NAAREF) to take action on the safety recommendations being issued in this letter.

On May 7, 2014, the NTSB adopted its report concerning the special investigation of 78 accidents that occurred during calendar year 2013 involving some aspect of agricultural operations, pilot training, or other crop protection activities.¹ Additional information about the special investigation and the resulting recommendations may be found in the report, which can be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>, under report number SIR-14/01.

As a result of this special investigation, the NTSB issued eight new recommendations, including four to the Federal Aviation Administration, and the following four recommendations to the NAAREF:

A-14-028

Work with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop and distribute agricultural aircraft operations-specific guidance on fatigue, fatigue management

¹ *Special Investigation Report on the Safety of Agricultural Aircraft Operations*, Special Investigation Report NTSB/SIR-14/01 (Washington, DC: NTSB, 2014).

strategies, and scheduling practices to help reduce the likelihood of fatigue, dehydration, hunger, and other physiological factors that can negatively affect a pilot's concentration, decision-making, and performance.

A-14-029

Work with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop and distribute agricultural operations-specific guidance on risk assessment and mitigation strategies that includes but is not limited to information and checklists for performing preflight and in-flight site surveys, with special emphasis on attention management and obstacle collision avoidance strategies; information on the effects of density altitude, crosswinds, and aircraft weight and balance on aircraft performance during takeoff, landing, and while maneuvering; fuel management; and aerodynamic stall awareness and avoidance.

A-14-030

Work with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop and distribute guidance materials for agricultural aircraft operators to assist them in implementing effective aircraft inspection and maintenance quality assurance programs, including but not limited to best practices for performing, recording, and tracking mandatory and recommended maintenance items for each aircraft.

A-14-031

Work with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop and distribute guidance that covers the 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 137 knowledge test subject areas and skills test items, including but not limited to comprehensive discussions of the knowledge test subject areas and illustrated descriptions of the safe and successful execution of the skills test maneuvers, with special emphasis on aerodynamic stall onset awareness and prevention.

Acting Chairman HART and Members SUMWALT, ROSEKIND, and WEENER concurred in these recommendations.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement them. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov. If it exceeds 10 megabytes, including attachments, 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.

[Original Signed]

By: Christopher A. Hart,
Acting Chairman