3. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this investigation the Safety Board recommended that the Federal Aviation Administration take the following actions:

(a) Require that the item "warn passengers" be inserted as one of the last items on the emergency landing or ditching checklists of all carriers, yet sufficiently advanced on the list to insure adequate time for passengers to brace for a crash. (See Appendix E.)

(b) Require that no flight involving the briefing of passengers regarding emergency procedures be dispatched without an operable public address system. The system should be functioning so that the flightcrew can speak to the passengers and a cabin attendant can speak to the passengers from at least one cabin station. (See Appendix F.)

(c) Take necessary steps to eliminate, within a reasonable time, the use of fabric-to-metal type seatbelts and require the metal-to-metal type of seatbelt with a standardized activating device. (See Appendix G.)

(d) Reexamine the methods for storage of lifevests aboard aircraft to eliminate any obstructions to expeditious access in the event of an emergency requiring their use. (See Appendix H.)

(e) Initiate action to install a VHF communications link between San Juan ARTCC and Juliana Tower. This action was scheduled for fiscal year 1972, and is being considered for priority action prior to that time if possible. (See Appendix I.)

The Safety Board further recommends that:

The FAA reassess the standards set forth in FAR, parts 37.122 and 37.178 pertaining to the certification of liferafts and lifevests, with a view toward eliminating the deficiencies in such equipment as evidenced by the investigative record of this accident. Research and development should be undertaken, as necessary, to accomplish this reassessment and improvement of standards.

A-71-033

The evidence stablished in this investigation indicates that additional deficiencies in survival procedures and survival equipment may exist. Because of this evidence, the Safety Board has in progress the writing of a special report concerning the study of passenger survival in this and other accidents. It is anticipated that this study will yield further recommendations concerning passenger survival.

BY THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD:

/s/ JOHN H. REED
Chairman

/s/ OSCAR M. LAUREL
Member

/s/ FRANCIS H. McADAMS
Member

/s/ LOUIS M. THAYER
Member

/s/ ISABEL A. BURGESS
Member