

Additional Information

Short-term Counseling & Referrals

Short-term professional mental health support is available to survivors, family members, and friends in their local area free of charge through a partnership with the American Red Cross. When requested or deemed appropriate, the Red Cross can provide referrals for longer-term mental health services or support groups. Please contact the TDA Division for additional information.

Victim Identification Process

Victim recovery, identification, and death certification are the responsibility of the medical examiner or coroner in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred. Contact information for the medical examiner or coroner is available upon request. Please contact the TDA Division for additional information.

Personal Effects

The NTSB may take custody of personal effects like personal electronic devices or pilot and aircraft logbooks for the investigation. These items will be returned to the owner or a designated family member following the conclusion of the investigation. Personal effects not retained by the NTSB may be collected by the medical examiner or coroner, law enforcement, or the aircraft insurance company.

The TDA Division can assist with inquiries about personal effects retained by the NTSB or provide contact information for other agencies that may have custody of personal effects.

Aircraft Wreckage

The NTSB has the authority to retain control of and manage access to the wreckage during the investigation. Inquiries regarding status of the wreckage under NTSB control may be directed to the TDA Division.



NTSB Core Values

Integrity
Transparency
Independence
Excellence

NTSB | National
Transportation
Safety Board

Transportation
Disaster
Assistance
(TDA) Division



General Aviation

Accident

Investigations

Information for survivors, families and friends

NTSB Website: www.nts.gov

TDA Division: www.nts.gov/tda

Email: assistance@nts.gov

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TRANSPORTATION DISASTER ASSISTANCE DIVISION

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National
Transportation
Safety Board

NTSB General Aviation Accident Investigations

What is the NTSB?

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged with investigating and determining the probable cause of all civil aviation accidents in the United States. From these safety investigations, the NTSB works to develop safety improvements aimed at preventing similar accidents from reoccurring. The NTSB is headquartered in Washington, DC, with regional offices and investigators located across the United States.

The NTSB is not part of the Department of Transportation (DOT) or affiliated with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). While local, state, and federal agencies may be involved with the on-scene phase of an investigation, the NTSB is the lead federal agency responsible for conducting the safety investigation. The NTSB has no regulatory or enforcement authority and does not investigate criminal activity.

Who is an IIC?

Assigned by the NTSB Office of Aviation Safety, the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC) is responsible for leading the safety investigation, and manages all aspects of the investigative process through to its conclusion. Depending on the circumstances of the accident, the IIC may travel to the accident site to collect information.

What is the TDA Division?

At the request of the IIC, NTSB Transportation Disaster Assistance (TDA) Division Specialists serve as the primary point of contact for survivors, family members, and friends to provide information and address questions regarding the NTSB investigative process. They provide notification when investigative reports and other products are publicly released. TDA Division Specialists also coordinate access to family assistance resources that may be available from government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Overview

General aviation accident investigations often require 12 to 24 months to complete. This is due to the complexity of the factual information that must be collected and the importance of conducting a comprehensive analysis to determine its relevance to the cause of the accident.

During the investigation, the following reports are published on the NTSB website:

- The **Preliminary Report** provides a synopsis of factual information collected during the on-scene phase of the investigation. This report is typically available within two weeks after the accident.
- The **Accident Docket** contains relevant factual information collected during an accident investigation that is used in the development of reports, summaries, and if issued, safety recommendations. The docket is available to access at an appropriate time during the investigation, or at its conclusion.
- The **Final Report** consolidates relevant factual information and provides the analysis of that information the findings, and the probable cause of the accident. This report replaces the preliminary report and is released at the end of the investigation in approximately 18 to 24 months following the accident.

The NTSB may issue **Safety Recommendations** at any time during the investigation to address a particular issue and specify how to correct the situation. Recommendations are issued to organizations best able to address the issue.

The NTSB will work with relevant stakeholders to identify safety issues that can be promptly corrected through suggested solutions. These solutions can be implemented without having to issue formal safety recommendations.

The NTSB may also issue **Safety Alerts** designed to enhance the understanding of safety issues and offer suggested actions to mitigate them.

Party System

The NTSB has the authority to designate organizations or corporations as parties to the investigation. Only representatives who can provide technical or specialized expertise are permitted to serve as party members and report directly to the NTSB.

Parties are permitted to assist the NTSB with the collection of factual information but cannot participate in its analysis. The NTSB is solely responsible for analyzing factual information to determine its relevance to the probable cause of the accident.

Staying Informed

Survivors, family members, and friends can contact the TDA Division directly regarding an NTSB investigation and to learn more about available resources. TDA Specialists work closely with the IIC to address questions regarding an investigation.

Survivors, family members, and friends are encouraged to use the NTSB website to access additional information about material provided in this brochure.

Contact the TDA Division

Phone: **(800) 683-9369**

(202) 314-6185

Email: **assistance@ntsb.gov**

On the Web: **www.ntsbt.gov/tda**



Accident
Investigation
Process

On-scene
Data Collection

Preliminary
Report Release

Post-scene
Data Collection

Report
Development

Analysis of
Factual Information

Final Report and
Accident Docket Release

