

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CRISIS COUNSELING

Short-term professional crisis counseling assistance is available at no cost to family members and survivors in their local area through the American Red Cross. 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 by contacting the TDA Division or the local law enforcement agency.

PERSONAL EFFECTS

The collection and return of personal effects involved in an accident are shared responsibilities between local law enforcement, the medical examiner or coroner, and the ASI. The complexity and scope of the accident influences the time needed to process and return personal effects. Items including GPS units, cell phones, memory cards, or laptop computers that are retained as evidence during the investigation will be returned to the owner of record after analysis or when the investigation is completed. The TDA Division can assist with inquiries pertaining to personal effects and can provide contact information for local law enforcement or the medical examiner or coroner.

AIRCRAFT WRECKAGE

The ASI has the authority to retain control of, and manage access to the wreckage during the course of the investigation. Family member or survivor inquiries regarding access to wreckage under the control of the NTSB should be directed to the TDA Division.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

The NTSB relies on support from federal, state, and local agencies during the on-scene phase of an investigation. Organizations present at the accident site may include law enforcement and other emergency response agencies, the FAA, and the American Red Cross.



National Transportation Safety Board

**Transportation Disaster
Assistance Division**

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General Aviation Accident Investigations

**Information for Families,
Survivors, and Friends**



**National Transportation Safety Board
Transportation Disaster Assistance Division**

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 and selected accidents in rail, highway, marine, and pipeline that occur in the United States. The NTSB is not part of the Department of Transportation (DOT) or affiliated with DOT agencies, including the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and has no regulatory or enforcement authority. From general aviation investigations, the NTSB works to develop safety improvements aimed at preventing accidents from reoccurring. The NTSB's headquarters is located in Washington, D.C., with regional offices and investigators positioned across the United States.

WHO IS THE AIR SAFETY INVESTIGATOR (ASI)?

Assigned by the NTSB's Office of Aviation Safety, the Air Safety Investigator (ASI) is responsible for leading the general aviation accident investigation, and usually travels to the accident scene to collect information related to the accident. While on scene, the ASI serves as the authorized NTSB spokesperson and manages all aspects of the investigation. The ASI has the discretion to designate party members, who provide qualified technical expertise and participate in the fact-finding phase of the investigation. Party members can include representatives from government agencies, industry, and associations that represent employees, functions, activities, and products involved in the accident.

WHAT IS TDA?

The NTSB's Transportation Disaster Assistance (TDA) Division coordinates family assistance resources at the request of the ASI or when family members or survivors contact the TDA Division directly. TDA Specialists serve as the primary resource to family members and survivors during the accident investigation process for investigative information.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE OPERATIONS

GENERAL AVIATION ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION OVERVIEW

Because of the complexity of general aviation accidents and the extensive nature of the accident investigation process, a year or more is usually required to complete a factual report and accident brief. If NTSB safety recommendations are issued as a result of an investigation, these recommendations can be issued at any time during the investigation process.

The NTSB aviation accident database is a searchable public resource containing records on individual aviation accidents. Once released by the NTSB, the following investigation documents are available by searching the database.

- The preliminary report is a synopsis of initial factual information collected during the on-scene phase of the investigation. The report is typically available within 5 days after the accident.
- The factual report consolidates pertinent factual information collected during the investigation. This report replaces the preliminary report and is usually available a year or more following the accident.
- The accident brief provides an analysis of the factual information and describes the probable cause of the accident. This document is usually available 4 to 6 weeks following the release of the factual report.

The NTSB public accident docket contains relevant factual information collected during an accident investigation that is used in the development of reports, briefs, and safety recommendations. The docket is available to the public when the factual report is released. Examples of docket items include photographs of the wreckage, maintenance records, witness interviews, and radar information.

Family members and survivors are encouraged to use the NTSB resources described above to obtain information about the accident investigation. These resources are available through the NTSB Investigations webpage:
<http://www. ntsb.gov/investigations>

STAYING INFORMED

Family members and survivors can contact the TDA Division directly for information regarding an accident investigation and available family assistance resources. TDA Specialists work closely with the ASI to answer questions for families and survivors about the investigation and coordinate requested family assistance resources.

The TDA Division can be contacted by calling (800) 683-9369 or (202) 314-6185, or by email at assistance@ntsb.gov

NTSB website: www. ntsb.gov

TDA Division webpage: www. ntsb.gov/tda.

