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January 14, 1997

Mr. Stephen R. Colgate  
Assistant Attorney General  
for Administration  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Colgate:

Thank you for your January 9th letter on possible DOJ reprogrammings. We are disappointed that the Department has concluded that it will not assist the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) by sharing in the financing of select costs that the NTSB is bearing for the investigation of the crash of TWA 800. Because of the ambiguities regarding the cause of the crash, both OMB and NTSB believed it was appropriate (and the FBI seemed to concur) that such costs as trawling for parts, fuselage wreckage mock-up, wreckage location and recovery, fire and explosion testing, and rental of storage facilities should be shared between NTSB and DOJ.

We are especially disappointed because the Department's rejection of the request will necessitate a 1997 NTSB supplemental request for this investigation that is higher than otherwise would be the case if the Department had chosen to participate. Finally, DOJ staff suggested that, based on preliminary conversations, there would be an excellent chance that the Appropriations Committees would act favorably to such a request. As the investigation proceeds and additional costs are borne, we hope the Department will reconsider its position on this matter.

Sincerely,

Kenneth L. Schwartz  
Deputy Associate Director  
Transportation, Commerce, Justice  
and Services Division

c:  
Honorable Jim Hall  
Chairman  
National Transportation Safety Board

