

NTSB Recommendation A-83-070

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Rec #: A-83-070
NTSB Status: Closed - Acceptable Action
Issue date: 10/31/1983
Accident Date: 6/2/1983
Source Event: ACCIDENT
Location: CINCINNATI Ohio

Mode: AVIATION
Most Wanted List: No
Closed date: 1/15/1986
Report Number: AAR-84-09
Accident ID: DCA83AA028

Background Synopsis:

THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD IS CONTINUING ITS INVESTIGATION OF THE ACCIDENT INVOLVING AIR CANADA FLIGHT 797 WHICH OCCURRED ON JUNE 2, 1983, WHEN THE FLIGHTCREW OF THE MCDONNELL DOUGLAS DC-9 AIRPLANE WAS FORCED TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING AT THE GREATER CINCINNATI AIRPORT BECAUSE OF AN IN-FLIGHT FIRE. THE INTERIOR MATERIALS OF THE AIRPLANE'S CABIN CONTINUED TO BURN AFTER THE LANDING. FIVE CREWMEMBERS AND 18 PASSENGERS WERE ABLE TO EVACUATE THE BURNING CABIN; THE REMAINING 23 PASSENGERS DIED IN THE FIRE. THE SAFETY BOARD'S INVESTIGATION HAS DETERMINED THAT THE FIRE BEGAN IN THE AIRPLANE'S LEFT REAR LAVATORY, BUT THE SOURCE OF IGNITION HAS NOT YET BEEN IDENTIFIED. TO PROMOTE A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM TO ADDRESS THE POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS SITUATION POSED BY IN-FLIGHT FIRES, THE SAFETY BOARD IS ISSUING NEW SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS RATHER THAN REITERATING RELEVANT SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO THE FAA.

Recommendation:

THE NTSB RECOMMENDS THAT THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION: EXPEDITE TESTING TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR SMOKE OR FIRE DETECTORS FOR USE IN AIRPLANE LAVATORIES FOR THE EARLY DETECTION OF FIRES INDEPENDENT OF PASSENGER OR CABIN ATTENDANT SENSORY PERCEPTIONS AND INITIATE RULEMAKING AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE TO REQUIRE INSTALLATION OF THE DETECTORS ON TRANSPORT CATEGORY AIRPLANES.

Correspondence:

Response Date: 1/27/1984 From: Addressee

Response:

FAA COMMENT: THE FAA HAS DEVELOPED A NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING (NPRM) PROPOSING EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS TO IMPROVE CABIN FIRE PROTECTION FOR AIRPLANES OPERATED UNDER 14 CFR PART 121. THIS NOTICE PROPOSES THAT EACH LAVATORY AND GALLEY BE EQUIPPED WITH A SMOKE OR FIRE DETECTOR SYSTEM WHICH PROVIDES WARNING TO A FLIGHT OR CABIN CREW STATION. THIS NPRM WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER FOR PUBLIC COMMENT WHEN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET REVIEW IS COMPLETED. SINCE WE ARE IN A FORMAL RULEMAKING

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PROCESS, IT IS NOT PRACTICAL TO ADVISE THE BOARD OF STATUS UPDATES. WHEN SIGNIFICANT EVENTS OCCUR, WE WILL NOTIFY THE BOARD.

Response Date: 7/9/1984 From: NTSB

Response:

The FAA's May 17, 1984 NPRM proposing the incorporation of smoke or fire detection systems in each lavatory and galley, the installation of automatic fire extinguishers in each lavatory trash receptacle, and equipping aircraft with at least two Halon 1211 handheld fire extinguishers has the potential of complying with the intent of the Board's recommendation. These Safety Recommendations will be classified as "Open--Acceptable Action," pending the adoption of appropriate regulations.

Response Date: 3/26/1985 From: Addressee

Response:

NEW FAR SECTION 121.308 (RE. LAVATORY FIRE PROTECTION) AMENDMENT ADOPTED 3/26/85. AFTER OCTOBER 29, 1986, NO PERSON MAY OPERATE A PASSENGER-CARRYING TRANSPORT CATEGORY AIRPLANE UNLESS EACH LAVATORY IN THE AIRPLANE IS EQUIPPED WITH A SMOKE DETECTOR SYSTEM OR EQUIVALENT THAT PROVIDES A WARNING LIGHT IN THE COCKPIT OR PROVIDES A WARNING LIGHT OR AUDIO WARNING IN THE PASSENGER CABIN WHICH WOULD BE READILY DETECTED BY A FLIGHT ATTENDANT, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE POSITIONING OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS THROUGHOUT THE PASSENGER COMPARTMENT DURING VARIOUS PHASES OF FLIGHT.

Response Date: 1/15/1986 From: NTSB

Response:

We are pleased to note that the new rule, FAR section 121.308, prescribes that after October 29, 1986, no person may operate a passenger-carrying transport category airplane unless each lavatory in the airplane is equipped with a smoke detector system or equivalent that provides a warning light in the cockpit or provides a warning light or audio warning in the passenger cabin which would be readily detected by a flight attendant, taking into consideration the positioning of flight attendants throughout the passenger compartment during various phases of flight. Data Source: NTSB Recommendations to FAA and FAA Responses This recommendation is classified as "Closed--Acceptable Action."