

### Training Modifications

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is proposing a “substantial and wide-ranging overhaul” of training for the crews of U.S. air carriers as part of a plan to emphasize their handling of in-flight emergencies.

The proposal, outlined in a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking (SNPRM) published in the *Federal Register*, would result in “the most significant changes to air carrier training in 20 years,” FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt says. “This is a major effort to strengthen the performance of pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers through better training.”

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The SNPRM addressed comments that were submitted in response to the original January 2009 NPRM, as well as requirements developed by Congress in legislation passed in 2010 (ASW, 10/10, p. 12).

The SNPRM calls for changes in ground and flight training that would require flight crews to “demonstrate, not just learn, critical skills in ‘real-world’ training scenarios,” the FAA said. “Pilots would be required to train as a complete flight crew, coordinate their actions through crew resource management and fly scenarios based on actual events. Dispatchers would have enhanced training and would be required to apply that knowledge in today’s complex operating environment.”

The revised proposal specifies that pilots must undergo training in recognizing and recovering from stalls and aircraft upsets, and prescribes remedial training for those who fail proficiency tests or perform unsatisfactorily in flight training. It also revises qualifications, training and evaluation requirements for crewmembers and dispatchers and specifies that flight attendants must participate in “hands-on emergency drills” every 12 months.

Public comments on the SNPRM will be accepted until July 19.

### Medical Attention

The airline industry should standardize the care available during in-flight medical emergencies to “improve the chances that passengers who become ill during air travel will do well,” according to a commentary published in *JAMA*, *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

“Because of improved aviation safety, most individual flight attendants will never experience an emergency landing or evacuation during their careers,” said the commentary by Melissa L.P. Mattison and Mark Zeidel, physicians at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

“By contrast, in-flight medical emergencies occur frequently. Yet the kinds of approaches that have improved flight safety have not been extended to providing optimal care for passengers who become acutely ill.”

Their recommendations included a call for a standardized recording system

for in-flight medical emergencies involving airline passengers in the United States, with mandatory reporting to the National Transportation Safety Board.

They also said that the medical experts should recommend the equipment that should be included in the medical kits aboard airplanes, “with a mandate that a standard kit, with identical items in identical locations, be on every flight.”

An emergency medical kit currently is required, but different airlines equip their kits differently, and as a result, medical personnel who respond to in-flight emergencies “are likely to lack familiarity with each airline’s emergency medical kit, delaying delivery of proper care as they first must identify and locate medications and supplies,” they said.

Another recommendation called for “enhanced and standardized” training of



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flight attendants in how to handle medical emergencies.

In addition, flight crews’ access to ground-to-air medical support should be standardized and “available to all passengers on all flights when on-plane health care professionals are not available,” the doctors said.

Increased standardization of training, equipment and recording practices offers “the potential to improve outcomes for airline passengers who become ill,” they said.

### Safety Pact

The European Union and the United States have implemented an agreement, negotiated in 2008, designed to coordinate civil aviation technical and administrative procedures and to enhance aviation safety.

In a printed statement, the European Commission said the agreement will be “the cornerstone of cooperation between the two sides in all matters of aviation safety.”

The pact provides a framework for the “continuous, transparent and timely” sharing of information related to aviation safety law and policies and provides “a firm basis for tackling safety problems,” the commission said.

### Blacklist Revision

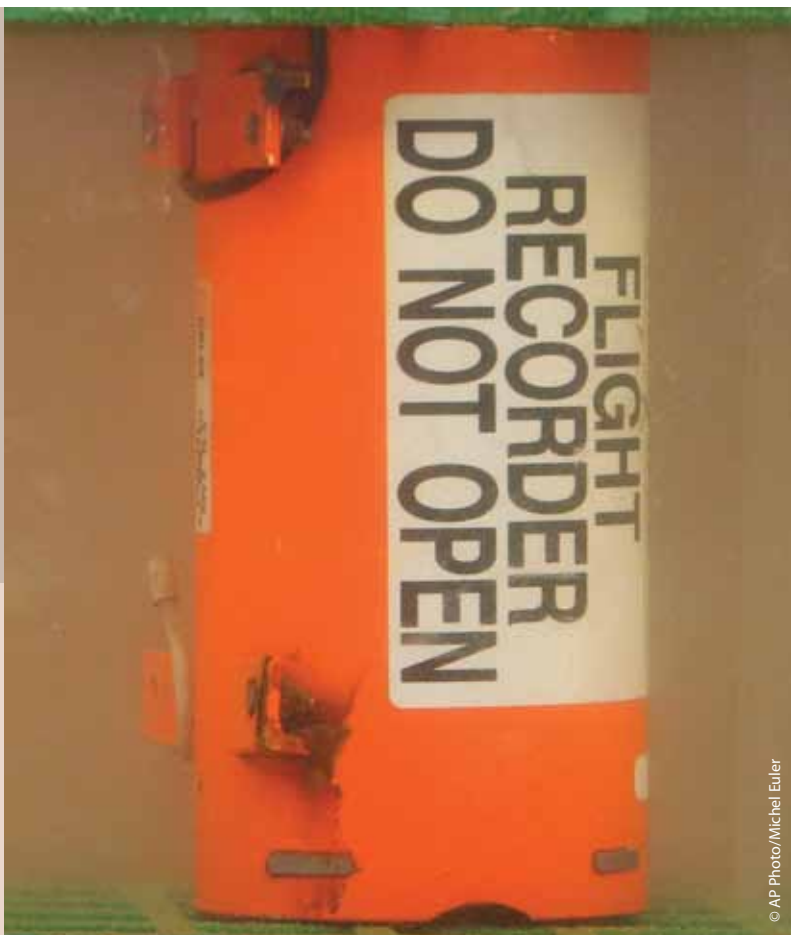
The European Commission, in the 17th revision of its list of airlines banned from operating in the European Union, has extended the ban to all air carriers certified in Mozambique, as well as two Boeing 767s operated by Air Madagascar.

Four Indonesian cargo air carriers and one air carrier based in Ukraine were removed from the list in April “as safety concerns have been satisfactorily addressed,” and will be permitted to operate within the EU, the commission said.

The updated list places a full ban on EU operations by all carriers from 21 countries, along with three individual carriers from other countries. In addition, 10 air carriers may operate only under specific conditions.

“The Commission is ready to work together with the authorities of those countries which have safety problems to overcome them as quickly and as efficiently as possible,” said Siim Kallas, commission vice president responsible for transport. “In the meantime, safety comes first. We cannot afford any compromise in this area. Where we have evidence inside or outside the European Union that air carriers are not performing safe operations, we must act to exclude any risks to safety.”

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Accident investigators say they have downloaded all data from the flight recorders in the Air France Airbus A330 that plunged into the Atlantic Ocean on June 1, 2009. The recovery of the recorders in May and the successful downloading of information have given investigators “a high degree of certainty that everything will be brought to light,” the French Bureau d’Enquêtes et d’Analyses says. The accident killed all 228 people on the Rio de Janeiro-to-Paris flight.

### Issues and Actions

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) completed 37 investigations of aviation accidents and incidents in the 2009–2010 fiscal year and identified 46 related safety risks — including 12 that it considered significant, the agency says.

The report on the year’s safety investigations involving events in all modes of transportation also identified 66 actions undertaken by the ATSB or by the aviation

industry to address the safety issues identified during the investigations. Of the 66 actions, 60 were identified as proactive actions taken by the industry, the report said.

“Proactive industry safety actions are encouraged before the release of any formal ATSB safety action, and so generally, the ATSB issues safety recommendations and safety advisory notices as a last resort,” the report said.

### Rotor-Blade Separation

Following a 2007 accident that followed the in-flight separation of a section of a Eurocopter EC 130B4 main rotor blade, the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has recommended daily checks of main rotor blades on specific helicopters for cracks and surface deterioration.

The pilot and seven passengers were not injured in the July 7 accident, but the helicopter was substantially damaged during the emergency descent and autorotation into the Hudson River in New York.

The NTSB said the probable causes of the accident were “the fatigue fracture and in-flight separation of a section of the composite main rotor blade trailing edge aft of the spar, due to inadequate manufacture, and the manufacturer’s failure to detect an out-of-specification deviation in the rotor blade’s trailing-edge roving.” (A “roving” is defined by the NTSB as a “collection of fibers in a parallel bundle with little or no twist.”)

The NTSB said that because the fibers were misaligned, loads were transferred to the skin, which is more susceptible than the fibers to cracking.

The safety recommendations to the European Aviation Safety Agency and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration called on the agencies to require Eurocopter to revise its



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maintenance manuals for all helicopters with the same rotor blades as the accident helicopter — part no. 355A11-0020 and/or 355A11-0030 — to require daily visual inspections of the trailing edges of the blades’ upper and lower skin surfaces.

A second recommendation called on the agencies to require operators of the affected helicopters to revise their maintenance manuals to include the daily blade trailing-edge inspections.

### Staffing Cuts

Staff reductions by the Spanish air navigation service provider AENA will place a single air traffic controller in charge of radar service for the Canarias Flight Information Region (FIR) during overnight hours, the International Federation of Air Line Pilots’ Associations (IFALPA) says.

The single-controller operation will be in effect between 0100 and 0500, IFALPA said.

IFALPA said that crews flying to Gran Canaria International Airport (GCLP) in the Canary Islands “should be aware that during these hours, no radar vectoring to the GCLP localizer or radar monitoring of the approach will be available.” In addition, radar assistance may not be available for standard instrument departures or standard terminal arrivals.

Kalajoki/Wikipedia



### In Other News ...

Seven countries have signed an agreement to establish the Functional Airspace Block–Central Europe (FAB-CE) — the fourth FAB to be created in the process of implementing the **Single European Sky**. The FABs are intended to end the fragmentation of Europe’s airspace, and to increase flight efficiency and safety. ... In the aftermath of reports of several **air traffic controllers** sleeping on the job, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has ordered management changes, accepted the resignation of Hank Krakowski as head of the FAA Air Traffic Organization and increased controller staffing on midnight shifts. ... The European Commission (EC) and the **International Civil Aviation Organization** have agreed to a plan calling for enhanced cooperation between the two bodies, including expanded contributions from the EC in preparatory work for ICAO development of policies and standards.

*Compiled and edited by Linda Werfelman.*