
STATEMENT OF MEMORANDUM

TO: TOM LATSON, NTSB INVESTIGATOR
FROM: UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY, FLIGHT RESEARCH OPERATIONS
SUBJECT: FLIGHT RESEARCH SAFETY
DATE: 6/20/2012

RESOLUTION TO CERTAIN SAFETY CONCERNS IDENTIFIED IN FLIGHT RESEARCH
OPERATIONS

Utah State University flight research operations desires a one hundred percent safe safety record going into the future. Safety is of serious concern to flight research operations management. Recent events have identified certain safety concerns which have been, and will be, addressed in one form or another. The following is a list of some of these concerns:

1. Flight Tracking – The NTSB pointed out that there are better ways to track flights including the use of modern technologies. These technologies were discussed by flight operations management and appropriate implementation of these technologies was considered for future operations.
2. Pilot Training for Aircraft Make and Model – It is apparent that the research aircraft being used are significantly different than the aircraft the research pilots are familiar with. It is suspected that the transition training provided by the research operations when a new pilot is assigned is inadequate. The remedy for this finding is to restructure the pilot training for each new pilot assigned to research operations. Restructured training would include increased landing practice and aircraft familiarization before setting out on research flights.
3. Current Weather Information – Research pilots are expected to have the latest weather reports. It was discovered that research pilot crews checked weather in the morning but received no updates throughout the remainder of the day. The need for the crew to have the latest weather reports will be reemphasized. A policy will be implemented where pilots will be directed to update weather reports every three to four hours or anytime weather deviates from that expected by the latest weather report received.

Flight research operations management thanks the NTSB for its valuable insight into flight research operations at Utah State University. It further thanks the NTSB for its recommendations concerning research operations safety. These recommendations have been duly noted and some have already been implemented into research operations. Flight research operations management will continue to evaluate and enhance the safety of flight research operations.

Flight Research Operations Management
Utah State University