

September 23, 2016

The Honorable Christopher A. Hart, Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20594

Dear Chairman Hart:

We write today to convey our concerns with a recent NBC Nightly News piece that used a mid-air accident, along with NTSB supplied data that portrayed general aviation safety in a biased and inaccurate light. We respectfully request the Board to publicly convey that general aviation is one of the safest modes of transportation in the United States.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation from 2008 to 2014, there were 277,310 automobile accident fatalities; 38,343 fatalities on motorcycles; 5,561 on bicycles; 5,831 fatalities in recreational boating accidents; and 3,628 in general aviation accidents.

Moreover, and although unrelated to transportation, it is interesting to point out that there are far less fatalities in private and business flying each year than even in non-transportation related accidents. For example, between 2008 and 2014 there were 126,000 in-home accident fatalities and another 5,159 fatalities by people falling out of bed.

As you know, just two years ago, the general aviation accident rate dropped to nearly one fatal accident for every 100,000 flight hours. To put that number into context there are 8,760 hours in a year so the fatal accident rate in general aviation equates to one fatality nearly every 12 years when you consider all of the hours flown by recreational and business aviation users each year.

Given the hundreds of thousands of flight hours each year it is understandable that aviation accidents receive significant media attention because they are so infrequent given the enormous amount of private and business flying in the United States. The media's reporting of general aviation accidents should be balanced just as we believe NTSB accident investigations should be thorough and rely solely on facts and not speculation. We believe the NTSB has an inherent responsibility to help provide media outlets with a comprehensive view of safety trends and outline the improvements in general aviation safety over the years.

We, as a responsible industry, do everything within our power to ensure that safety remains our top priority and we must continue to work together to manage risk in general aviation. We must not let media reports like these discredit the hard work and gains we have all made together and we encourage the NTSB to help set the record straight.

Sincerely,
Aeronca Aviators Club
Aircraft Electronics Association
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Bellanca-Champion Club

Cardinal Flyers Online LLC
Cessna Pilots Society
Commemorative Air Force
Experimental Aircraft Association
Flying Dentists Association
Flying Physicians Association
International Council of Air Shows
International 180/185 Club, Inc.
Lancair Owners and Builders Organization
Light Aircraft Manufacturers Association
Malibu/Mirage Owners & Pilots Association
Mooney Summit, Inc.
National Agricultural Aviation Association
National Association of State Aviation Officials
National Business Aviation Association
Recreational Aviation Foundation
Sonex Builders and Pilots Foundation