

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

3.68 The committee recommends that the ATSB retrieve VH-NGA flight data recorders without further delay.

Recommendation 2

4.41 The committee recommends that the minister, in issuing a new Statement of Expectations to the ATSB, valid from 1 July 2013, make it clear that safety in aviation operations involving passengers (fare paying or those with no control over the flight they are on, e.g. air ambulance) is to be accorded equal priority irrespective of flight classification.

Recommendation 3

4.43 The committee recommends that the ATSB move away from its current approach of forecasting the probability of future events and focus on the analysis of factors which allowed the accident under investigation to occur. This would enable the industry to identify, assess and implement lessons relevant to their own operations.

Recommendation 4

4.69 The committee recommends that the ATSB be required to document investigative avenues that were explored and then discarded, providing detailed explanations as to why.

Recommendation 5

4.78 The committee recommends that the training offered by the ATSB across all investigator skills sets be benchmarked against other agencies by an independent body by, for example, inviting the NTSB or commissioning an industry body to conduct such a benchmarking exercise.

Recommendation 6

4.79 The committee recommends that, as far as available resources allow, ATSB investigators be given access to training provided by the agency's international counterparts. Where this does not occur, resultant gaps in training/competence must be advised to the minister and the Parliament.

Recommendation 7

4.87 The committee recommends that the *Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003* be amended to require that the Chief Commissioner of the ATSB be able to demonstrate extensive aviation safety expertise and experience as a prerequisite for the selection process.

Recommendation 8

4.101 The committee recommends that an expert aviation safety panel be established to ensure quality control of ATSB investigation and reporting processes along the lines set out by the committee.

Recommendation 9

4.103 The committee recommends that the government develop a process by which the ATSB can request access to supplementary funding via the minister.

Recommendation 10

6.41 The committee recommends that the investigation be re-opened by the ATSB with a focus on organisational, oversight and broader systemic issues.

Recommendation 11

6.52 The committee recommends that CASA processes in relation to matters highlighted by this investigation be reviewed. This could involve an evaluation benchmarked against a credible peer (such as FAA or CAA) of regulation and audits with respect to: non-RPT passenger carrying operations; approach to audits; and training and standardisation of FOI across regional offices.

Recommendation 12

6.55 The committee recommends that CASA, in consultation with an Emergency Medical Services industry representative group (eg. Royal Flying Doctor Service, air ambulance operators, rotary wing rescue providers) consider the merit, form and standards of a new category of operations for Emergency Medical Services. The minister should require CASA to approve the industry plan unless there is a clear safety case not to. Scope for industry to assist as part of an audit team should also be investigated where standardisation is an issue. This should be completed within 12 months and the outcome reported publicly.

Recommendation 13

6.58 The committee recommends that a short inquiry be conducted by the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport into the current status of aviation regulatory reform to assess the direction, progress and resources expended to date to ensure greater visibility of the processes.

Recommendation 14

7.15 The committee recommends that the ATSB-CASA Memorandum of Understanding be re-drafted to remove any ambiguity in relation to information that should be shared between the agencies in relation to aviation accident investigations, to require CASA to:

- advise the ATSB of the initiation of any action, audit or review as a result of an accident which the ATSB is investigating.
- provide the ATSB with the relevant review report as soon as it is available.

Recommendation 15

7.16 The committee recommends that all meetings between the ATSB and CASA, whether formal or informal, where particulars of a given investigation are being discussed be appropriately minuted.

Recommendation 16

8.35 The committee recommends that, where relevant, the ATSB include thorough human factors analysis and discussion in future investigation reports. Where human factors are not considered relevant, the ATSB should include a statement explaining why.

Recommendation 17

9.18 The committee recommends that the ATSB prepare and release publicly a list of all its identified safety issues and the actions which are being taken or have been taken to address them. The ATSB should indicate its progress in monitoring the actions every 6 months and report every 12 months to Parliament.

Recommendation 18

9.40 The committee recommends that where a safety action has not been completed before a report being issued that a recommendation should be made. If it has been completed the report should include details of the action, who was involved and how it was resolved.

Recommendation 19

9.42 The committee recommends that the ATSB review its process to track the implementation of recommendations or safety actions to ensure it is an effective closed loop system. This should be made public, and provided to the Senate Regional and Rural Affairs and Transport Committee prior to each Budget Estimates.

Recommendation 20

9.44 The committee recommends that where the consideration and implementation of an ATSB recommendation may be protracted, the requirement for regular updates (for example 6 monthly) should be included in the TSI Act.

Recommendation 21

9.45 The committee recommends that the government consider setting a time limit for agencies to implement or reject recommendations, beyond which ministerial oversight is required where the agencies concerned must report to the minister why the recommendation has not been implemented or that, with ministerial approval, it has been formally rejected.

Recommendation 22

9.77 The committee recommends that Airservices Australia discuss the safety case for providing a hazard alert service with Fijian and New Zealand ATC (and any other relevant jurisdictions) and encourage them to adopt this practice.

Recommendation 23

9.104 The committee recommends that the relevant agencies review whether any equipment or other changes can be made to improve the weather forecasting at Norfolk Island. The review would include whether the Unicom operator should be an approved meteorological observer.

Recommendation 24

9.106 The committee recommends that the relevant agencies investigate appropriate methods to ensure that information about the incidence of, and variable weather conditions at, Norfolk Island is available to assist flight crews and operators managing risk that may result from unforeseen weather events.

Recommendation 25

9.108 The committee recommends that the Aeronautical Information Package (AIP) En Route Supplement Australia (ERSA) is updated to reflect the need for caution with regard to Norfolk Island forecasts where the actual conditions can change rapidly and vary from forecasts.

Recommendation 26

10.35 The committee recommends that in relation to mandatory and confidential reporting, the default position should be that no identifying details should be provided or disclosed. However, if there is a clear risk to safety then the ATSB, CASA and industry representatives should develop a process that contains appropriate checks and balances.

