



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 08010  
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Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

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*An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.*

**SUBJECT:** Commercial Air Tour Flight Monitoring Program

**Purpose:** Recommend that part 91 and 135 air tour operators maintain a proactive flight operations monitoring program to assist in increasing the quality of service, to ensure pilot compliance with company and safety practices, and to assist NTSB accident investigators in investigating aircraft accident causal factors.

**Background:** On September 7, 2007, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) submitted recommendation A-07-92 to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in response to a part 135 aircraft accident where a helicopter impacted a canyon wall while maneuvering through the Grand Canyon on what operators refer to as the "Descent Canyon" tour route. There were no survivors, and the helicopter was completely destroyed by the impact and the ensuing fire.

**Discussion:** After reviewing air tour accidents, the NTSB revealed that most air tour accidents occurred as a result of human performance. Cameras, flight recorders, pilot reports, passenger feedback forms, and other innovative in-house safety programs can all provide important information about pilot practices. Although such information can be useful to aircraft accident investigators, it can also be used by operators to systematically monitor flight operations on a routine basis and thus identify and remediate any identified unsafe practices.

**Recommended action:** Air tour management personnel are highly encouraged to implement a proactive flight operations monitoring program. This program should include innovative monitoring devices, along with periodic reviews of selected devices, videos, etc. Operators should incorporate a process where passenger concerns can be immediately reported to the Director of Operations, Chief Pilot, or company owner for review and consideration.

**Point of Contact:** Any questions regarding this InFO should be directed Dennis Mills, Part 135 Air Carrier Operations Branch, AFS-250 at (202) 267-8166.