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of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

InFO

Information for Operators

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http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

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 Operator Flight and Manifest Documentation

Purpose: Provide specific recommendations for air tour operators to maintain a responsive passenger manifest system that would correlate the flight number, passenger names, and contact information for NTSB accident investigators to use following an air tour accident.

Background: On September 7, 2007, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) submitted recommendation A-07-91 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: In the past five years there have been several high profile mishaps in the Grand Canyon resulting in significant loss of life and aircraft destruction. Air tour operators are not required to install flight recorders on their aircraft and therefore, the Safety Board investigators must frequently rely on the statements of passengers who previously flew with the accident pilot for information. Locating and interviewing these passengers helps investigators ascertain the pilot’s flying habits, attitude, and skill level. Further, such information helps investigators identify operational issues or recurring safety concerns that may be related to the accident. During the investigation, the NTSB discovered that there was only minimal passenger information available.

Recommended action: Air tour management personnel are highly encouraged to implement a responsive passenger manifest system that would correlate the flight number, passenger names, and contact number. Additionally, these records should be maintained for a minimum of 30 day. These records will assist NTSB accident investigators in determining the causal factors related to an air tour accident.

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.