



National Transportation Safety Board

Federal Transit Administration
Joint SSO/RTA Workshop

October 25, 2017

What to Expect When the NTSB Arrives

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NTSB Mission – *Independently Advancing Transportation Safety*

To promote transportation safety by

- maintaining our congressionally mandated independence and objectivity;
- conducting objective, precise accident investigations and safety studies;
- performing fair and objective airman and mariner certification appeals; and
- to assist victims of transportation disasters and their families.

National Transportation Safety Board 50 Years of Saving Lives

Fifty years ago, on April 1, 1967, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) came into existence, helping to fulfill President Lyndon B. Johnson's pledge to ensure the safety of Americans on land, sea, and air.

National Transportation Safety Board— *50 Years of Saving Lives*

In 1966, Johnson recommended the creation of a single Department of Transportation (DOT), bringing together the functions of many far-flung agencies.

“ ...

No function of the new agency—no responsibility of its Secretary—will be more important than safety.”

Independent Safety Board Act of 1974

- Fully independent agency
- Investigate transportation accidents
- Determine probable cause
- Develop safety recommendations
- Conduct safety studies

NTSB Congressional Mandate

Investigate every civilian aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in the other modes of transportation – highway, marine, pipeline, and railroad – and to issue safety recommendations intended to prevent future accidents

NTSB Legislative Mandate

- **Maintaining** our congressionally mandated independence and objectivity
- **Conducting** objective, precise accident investigations and safety studies
- **Performing** fair and objective airman and mariner certification appeals
- **Advocating** and **Promoting** safety recommendations
- **Assisting** victims of transportation disasters and their families.

NTSB Mission

*Independently
Advancing
Transportation
Safety*

- Fact Based Investigations
- Single focus is safety
- Not liability or blame
- Determine probable cause
- Make safety recommendations

NTSB Authority

- Title 49 of the United States Code, Chapter 11
- Governed by Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations*, Chapter VIII
 - Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations*, Parts 800-850

NTSB Priority in Investigation

- NTSB railroad investigations have priority over other federal investigations
- Federal agencies, such as the FRA, FTA, or EPA may conduct concurrent investigations
- Exception – Criminal investigations are led by the FBI



Transportation Disaster Assistance

- Rail Passenger Disaster Family Assistance Act of 2008
 - Public Law 110-432
 - §24316. Plans to address needs of families of passengers involved in rail passenger accidents.
 - For Additional information:
 - National Transportation Safety Board
 - Transportation disaster Assistance Division
 - www.nts.gov/tda
 - 202-314-6185
 - assistance@nts.gov

NTSB Board of Directors

- Five Board Members
 - One Chairman
 - One Vice-Chairman
- Nominated by President
- Confirmed by the Senate
- 3 Members constitute quorum
- No more than 3 Members of the same political party
- Board Members are not investigators



NTSB Board Members On-Scene

- Provide the media with factual information
- Update victims and families about the facts and progress of the investigation
- Brief government officials about the progress of the investigation



NTSB Accident Investigation

The NTSB primary tool for developing safety recommendations for continual improvement in transportation safety is the accident investigation



NTSB Investigative Offices

Aviation Safety



Highway Safety



Marine Safety



Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations

- Investigates accidents involving railroads, pipelines, and the transportation of hazardous materials.
- Four divisions:
 - Railroad Division
 - Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Division
 - Survival Factors and Human Performance Division
 - Report Writing Division

Railroad Division

- Division Chief
- Deputy Division Chief
- 13 railroad investigators
- Strategically located:
 - Washington, DC
 - California
 - Illinois
 - New Jersey
 - Virginia
 - Texas



NTSB – 50 Years of Saving Lives – Rail Highlights

- 1970 first positive train control safety recommendation
- Independent Safety Board Act of 1974
- 1974 nationwide Operation Lifesaver highway-railroad grade crossing program safety recommendation
- 1990 the first NTSB Most Wanted List
- 1994 Amtrak passenger safety information
- 2008 Rail Safety Improvement Safety Act of 2008 – Positive Train Control mandate following Chatsworth, California Metrolink accident
- 2008 Rail Passenger Disaster Family Assistance Act
- 2012 tank car improvements following derailment in Cherry Valley, Illinois on June 19, 2009
- 2013 Lac Magantic tragedy following derailment of unit crude oil train on July 6th
- 2015 call for stronger tank car specifications following the Mount Carbon, Virginia derailment
- 2017 use of NTSB UAS as accident investigation tool in Grattinger, Iowa derailment involving hazardous materials

Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations



Glendale, CA



Hyndman, PA



Graettinger, IA



CTA O'Hara Airport



Casselton, ND

Hazardous Materials Investigations

- 2 Hazardous Materials Investigators
 - Support all modes of transportation:
 - Pipeline
 - Railroad
 - Highway
 - Marine
 - Special Investigations



Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Accidents

- Office of Highway Safety usually leads the NTSB accident investigation
- Railroad investigators may support the investigation or take the lead



Composition of Investigative Team

- Led by an NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC)
- Groups led by an NTSB group chairman in specific disciplines:
 - Mechanical Group
 - Track
 - Operations
 - Signals
 - Human Performance
 - Survival Factors
 - Hazmat



NTSB On-Scene Process

- Organizational meetings
- Daily progress meetings
- Close-out meeting
- Sharing of information
 - Field notes
 - Evidence
 - Interview Transcripts
 - NTSB Factual Reports



What is the NTSB Party System?

Parties are limited to persons, government agencies, companies, manufacturers, and associations whose employees, functions, activities, or products were involved in the accident and who can provide suitable qualified technical personnel to actively assist in the investigation



Parties to an NTSB Investigation

Parties may include representatives from:

- Railroad
- Rail Transit Agency
- FRA
- FTA
- Labor organizations
- Emergency responders
- Equipment manufacturers



Limitations on Party Participation

Not permitted to participate in any phase of the investigation include:

- Public affairs
- News/media
- Attorneys
- Claims Agents

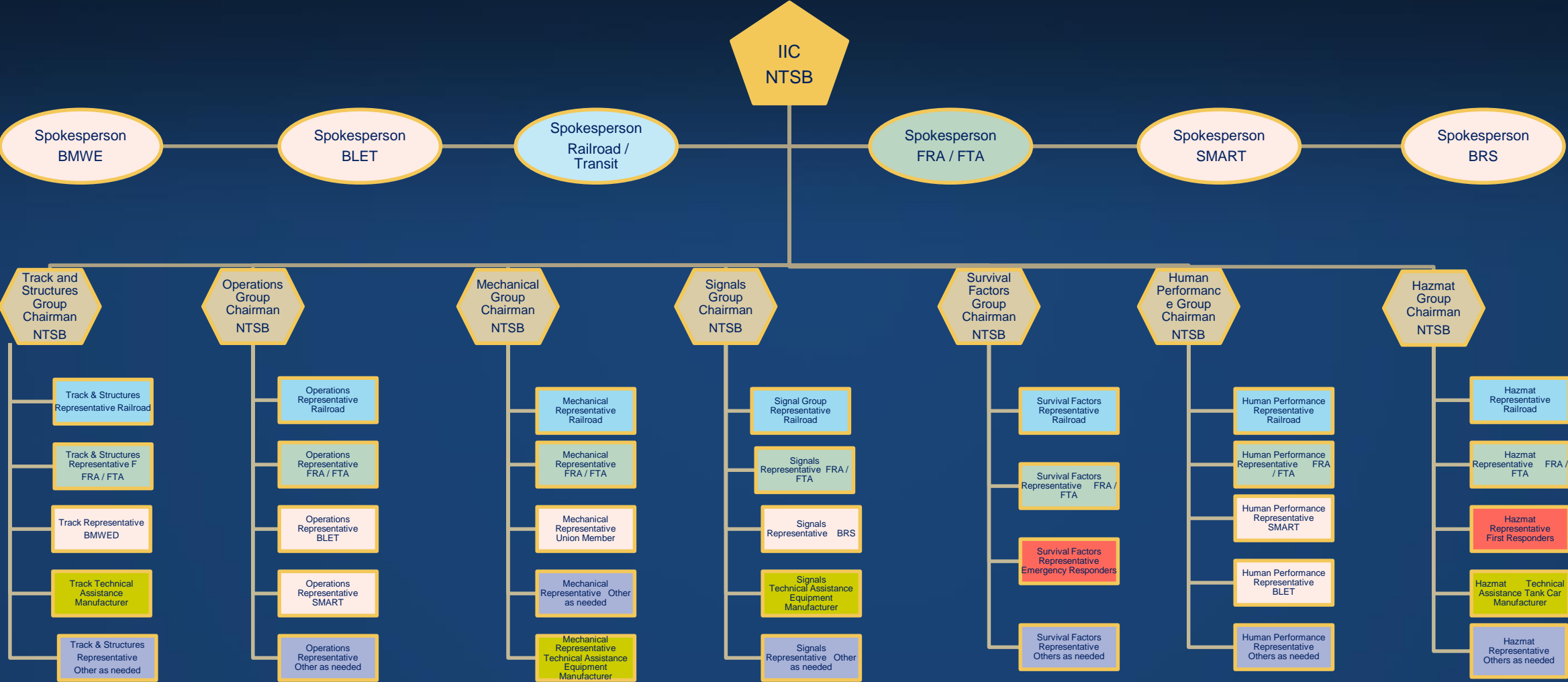


Party Member Limitations

Parties are prohibited from:

- Speaking about the investigative findings with the media or the public
- Conducting independent investigations
- Withholding information from the NTSB

NTSB Party Organizational Chart



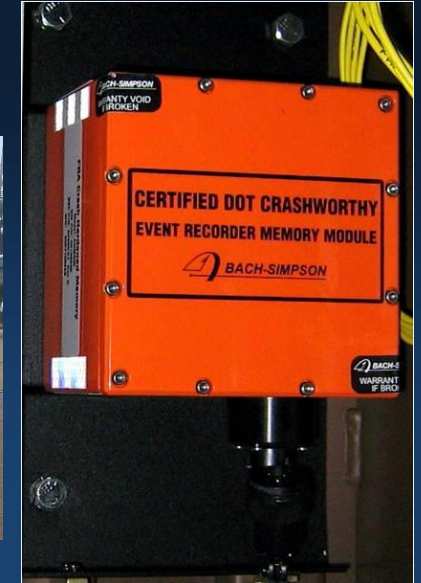
The NTSB Party System

- Groups work under the direction of the Group Chairmen
- Groups remain intact for the duration of the investigation
- All parties do not participate in all groups



NTSB Specialized Groups

- Medical
- Metallurgy
- Event recorders
- Video/audio recorders
- Fire/Explosion
- Scientists and engineers



Office of Research and Engineering

Provides technical support to all transportation accidents investigations

- Materials lab
- Recorders lab
- Simulations and animations
- Safety studies and statistics
- Medical doctors



Additional NTSB Support

- Media Relations
- Government Affairs
- Transportation Disaster Assistance
- General Counsel



Party Participation After On-Scene Work

- Follow-up interviews
- Participation in materials laboratory examinations as necessary
- Participation in video group and other groups as necessary
- Technical Review
 - Party representatives review NTSB group factual report, edit for factual accuracy as needed, and concur with report
 - Party spokespersons participate in the technical review of all group factual reports, edit for factual accuracy as needed, and concur with report

NTSB Investigative Hearing

- Public forum to gather additional facts about an accident
- Board Members serve as the Board of Inquiry
- NTSB technical staff serve as the technical panel
- Party spokesperson participation
- Witnesses – people and organizations that can provide special or technical knowledge



NTSB Accident Report

- Draft report is prepared by the IIC
- Report usually published within 12 to 24 months after the accident
- Some presented to the Board a public meeting
- Board Members vote to adopt the report, the findings, the probable cause, and the safety recommendations, as presented or with modifications



Additional NTSB Reports

Special Investigation Report

- Focus on specific safety issue
- May involve multiple accidents
- Determine facts, conditions, and circumstances about the safety issues

Safety Study

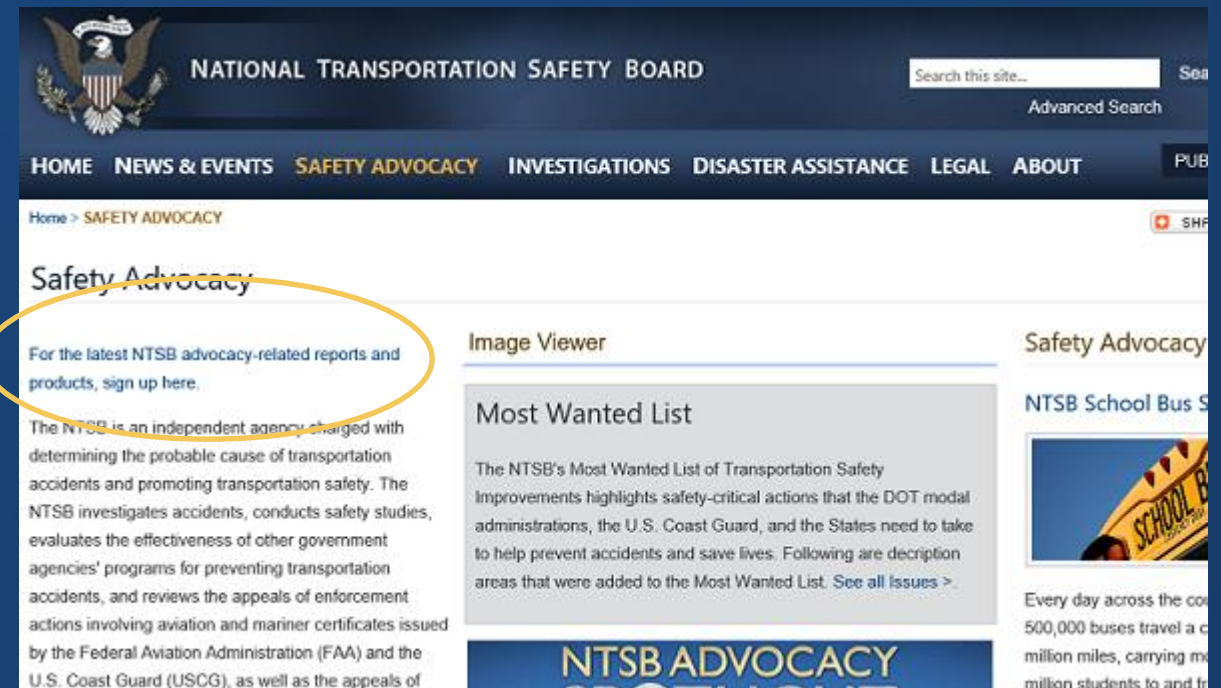
- Evaluate the effectiveness of government and industry transportation safety programs
- Examine policy issues, system safety, and management effectiveness

Sign up to receive the latest NTSB Safety Alerts, Special Investigation Reports, Most Wanted List updates and special products, safety and outreach event announcements—delivered to your inbox! Three options to register:



At WWW.NTSB.GOV:

On our Home page, click on the envelope icon  Next to the social media icons.



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At WWW.NTSB.GOV/SAFETY :
Click on the sign-up link at the top of the safety advocacy page.



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