

An Introduction to the NTSB

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Overview

- Agency Overview & Mission
- Investigative Process
- Family Assistance
- Media Relations

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How many people work for...



FBI - ~35,000 employees



FAA - ~48,000 employees (full & part time)



NTSB - 417

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Agency Overview

- Independent Federal agency
- Reports directly to Congress
- **No regulatory authority**
- Composed of five Board Members
- ~ \$145 million budget (FY 2022)



Chair
Jennifer Homendy



Vice Chairman
Bruce Landsberg



Member
Michael Graham



Member
Thomas Chapman



Member
(Vacant)

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Our Mission

Making transportation safer by conducting independent accident investigations, advocating safety improvements, and deciding pilots' and mariners' certification appeals.



INTEGRITY
TRANSPARENCY
INDEPENDENCE
EXCELLENCE
DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION

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Legislative Mandate

- Maintain congressionally mandated independence and objectivity;
- Conduct objective, precise accident investigations and safety studies;
- Perform fair and objective airman and mariner certification appeals;
- Advocating and promoting safety recommendations;
- Assist victims of transportation accidents and their families.

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How have NTSB Recs affected your life?

- 1968: first seatbelt and impairment recommendations (use mandatory by states in the mid-1980's)
- 1970: first positive train control recommendations (became law in 2008)
- 1982: first recommendations to states to raise minimum drinking age to 21 (age set nationwide in 1987)
- 1984: FAA issues new standards for emergency exit lighting following NTSB recommendations
- 1990: Recommendations from Exxon Valdez grounding incorporated in Oil Pollution Act of 1990 and National Contingency Plan
- 1996: NTSB actions lead to states developing Graduated Driver Licensing programs
- 1997: Recs. lead to "Call Before You Dig" program (nation-wide 811# est. 2007)
- 2004: USCG requires that children wear PFDs aboard recreational vessels based on NTSB recs.
- 2011: NTSB calls on states to ban the non-emergency use of PEDs by drivers
- 2015: NTSB issues report on effectiveness of forward collision avoidance systems in roadway vehicles. Shortly thereafter, 20 automakers agree to make automatic emergency braking standard equipment by 2022

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Investigative Responsibilities

- All U.S. civil aviation and commercial space accident investigations
- Accredited representative for foreign aviation accidents
- Selected surface mode accidents:
 - Rail
 - Highway
 - Marine
 - Pipeline
 - Hazmat

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Law Enforcement Investigations

Aviation crashes assumed to be accident unless evidence indicates intentional act

- Formal transfer process to FBI

Law enforcement takes lead if evidence indicates intentional criminal act

- NTSB serves as a subject matter resource in support of criminal investigation

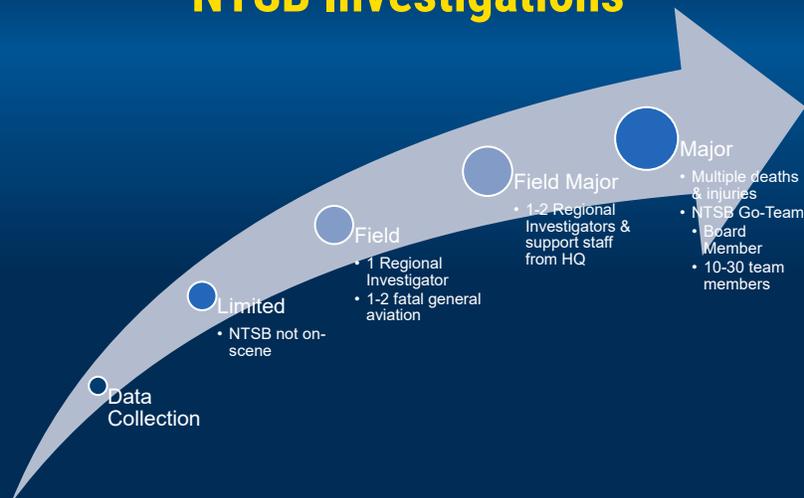
Concurrent criminal investigations

- Public release of information becomes complicated

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NTSB Investigations



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Major Investigations

Team Composition

Board Member: serves as the public representative for the investigation

Investigator-in-Charge: manages all aspects of the investigation

Investigative Specialists: subject-matter focus

Communications: Government Affairs, Media Relations, TDA

IT specialists

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On-Scene Flow of Information

Organizational Meeting

- Designate parties and party coordinators
- Establish and organize investigative groups

Progress Meetings

- Summarize factual information & develop plan of action for on-scene phase
- Info for briefings

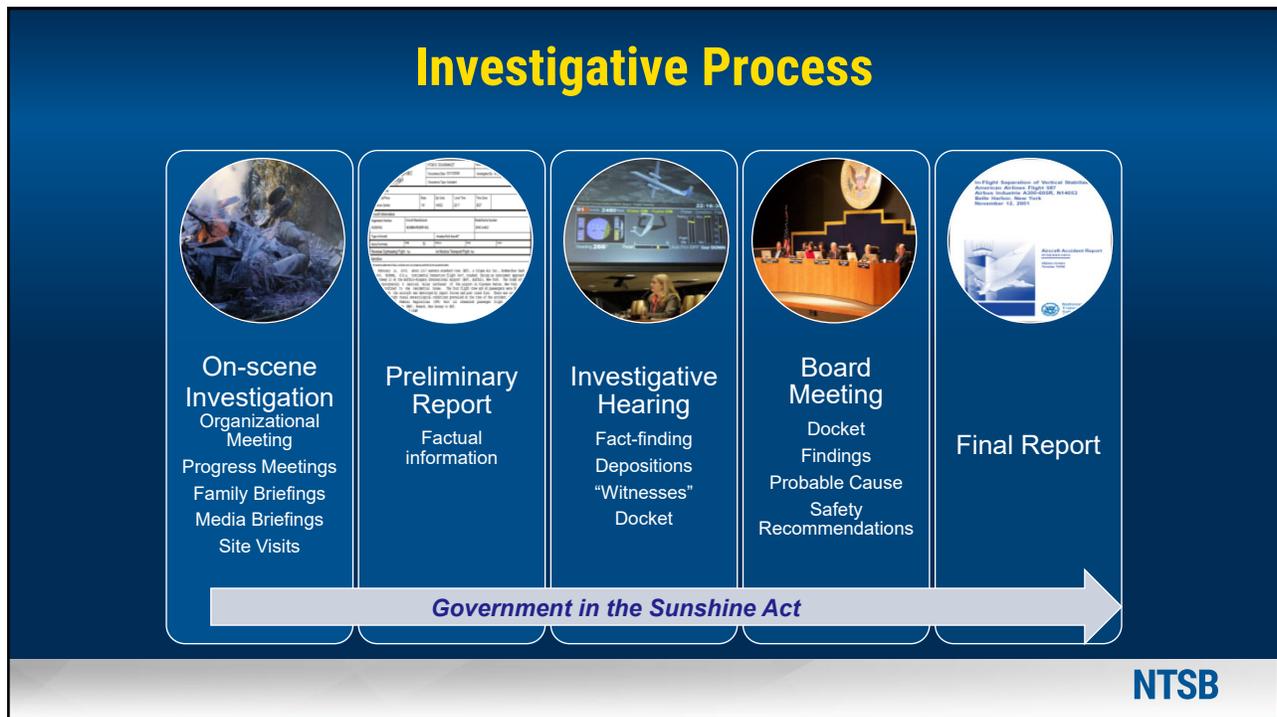
Family Briefings

Media Engagement

- Briefings
- Press releases
- Social media

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Responding to a Transportation Accident: A Guide for Police and Public Safety Personnel

- Potential hazards
- Scene security/control
- Wreckage documentation
- Documenting injured/fatalities
- Witness documentation
- Media relations
- Family Assistance
- NTSB contact information



- **Wreckage documentation**
 - Obtain the aircraft registration number (N number), type of the aircraft, make, model, and serial number, and any other unique identifying information.
 - Photograph or video record accident scene starting at the end point of impact (if available).
 - Record equipment such as batteries, cockpit, or control panel, and other items that may have been damaged by the accident.
 - Identify and secure any other surviving items belonging to vehicles found at the accident scene.
- **Injured/fatalities**
 - Obtain patient transport information from EMS to account for all injured victims.
 - Coordinate with the NTSB before documenting and removing body-impacted vehicles.
 - If the NTSB is not available, document the following before removing vehicles:
 - The original position of the vehicle.
 - Identification of accident victims.
 - Any mechanical or structural malfunctions of the vehicle.
 - Identification of persons, or equipment, in the vicinity.
 - Obtain names and contact information for all people involved in the accident.
- **Witness documentation**
 - Obtain each witness' name, address, email address, and phone number.
 - Obtain the location of the witness relative to the accident site.
 - Record the location of other files observed or heard (e.g., NTSB knowledge).
 - Identify the name of the person reporting the accident (e.g., NTSB knowledge).
 - Identify and secure any other surviving items belonging to vehicles found at the accident scene.
- **Media relations**
 - Only the NTSB can release investigation information and opinions about the safety investigation.
 - Only for public safety purposes can you be the first to speak to the media regarding the accident.
 - Media inquiries about the NTSB's investigation of an accident should be referred to the NTSB Media Relations at (202) 241-0100.
 - The NTSB will not release copies of any witnesses' statements, or other items associated with an accident.
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- **Transportation accident safety personnel**
 - Protect life, property, and evidence.
 - Establish a security perimeter around the accident scene.
 - Allow public safety personnel access to preserve life, property, and evidence, and to conduct investigations.
 - Record the location of the accident scene and the perimeter.
 - Record and secure ground signs and vehicle marks by the accident scene. Use standard or public safety-approved physical markers placed by the accident scene.
 - Record and photograph non-transportation objects that are or subject to the accident location. Mark possible safety hazards for the NTSB investigation.
 - Remove hazardous vehicles to reduce traffic, and ensure that recovery operations do not alter critical physical evidence, such as skid marks or vehicle damage.
 - Establish a record of personnel who enter the accident scene. Document emergency services and the presence of vehicles in the vicinity, including the date or date of the accident.
- **Potential hazards at an accident scene**
 - Identify and secure potential hazards at the accident scene. These include:
 - Unexploded ordnance (UXO).
 - Unexploded incendiary (UI).
 - Unexploded high explosive (HE).
 - Unexploded high voltage (HV) cables, and
 - Unexploded fuel tanks.
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 - Unexploded fuel tanks.

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• <https://www.nts.gov/tda/TDADocuments/SPC2001.pdf>

The NTSB's Family Assistance Program

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Fundamental Concerns

	Notification of Involvement "Are they involved?" <ul style="list-style-type: none">Initial notificationImmediate factual information
	Victim Accounting "Where are they?" <ul style="list-style-type: none">Search & rescue, transported, hospitalizedSearch & recovery of fatalitiesVictim identification, death certification
	Access to Resources & Information "How do I stay informed and get help?" <ul style="list-style-type: none">Basic needs & support servicesInvestigative updatesFinancial, logistical, & legal assistance
	Personal Effects "Where are their belongings?" <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recovery, processing & returnAssociated & unassociated

NTSB TDA Handout 10.2020

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Family Assistance Provides...

- ✓ Factual information
- ✓ The people to address questions/concerns
- ✓ Safety and security (from public and media)
- ✓ Support through the grief process
- ✓ Consistency and routine

By...

- ✓ Building rapport and credibility
- ✓ Creating a process to address fundamental concerns
- ✓ Conveying realistic expectations
- ✓ Planning and preparedness
- ✓ Interagency collaboration
- ✓ Maintaining flexibility

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Family Assistance Does Not Provide...

"Closure"

- Supports the grief/recovery process
- Encourages resiliency

All the answers

- Information on process & what to expect
- Factual information when available/allowable

Support for all needs

Elimination of legal actions

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How does the NTSB define “family member”?

Federal Family Assistance Legislation does not provide a definition of family member.

- Immediate or extended family
- Loved ones
- Friends
- Colleagues
- Survivors (self)

Family member vs. legal next of kin

- Medicolegal significance
- Personal effects
- Legal proceedings

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Why provide assistance?

- Humanitarian / ethical
 - “The right thing to do”
- Order to chaos
- Consistent messaging
- Realistic expectations
- Public image
- Legislation*

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U.S. Federal Transportation Accident Family Assistance Legislation



- Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act (1996 & 1997)**
 - 49 USC § 1136: NTSB & the Designated Organization
 - 49 USC § 41113: U.S. Air Carriers
 - 49 USC § 41313: Foreign Air Carriers
- Rail Passenger Disaster Family Assistance Act (2008)**
 - 49 USC § 1139: NTSB & the Designated Organization
 - 49 USC § 24316: Rail Passenger Carriers
- Any NTSB Investigation (2018)**
 - 49 USC § 1140: Info for Families of Individuals Involved in Accidents

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Criteria: Legislated Accident

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTSB is the lead investigative agency • Results in any loss of life • DOT Economic Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity • FAR Part 121 air carriers • FAR Part 135 air taxi/commuter (few) • FAR Part 129 air carriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTSB is the lead investigative agency • Results in any loss of life • Interstate / intrastate / intercity high speed passenger rail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • i.e., Amtrak & future high-speed passenger rail • Excludes: commuter, tourist, historic, scenic, or excursion rail carriers
<p style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">Air</p> 	<p style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">Rail</p> 

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U.S. Air Carriers with Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity

<https://www.transportation.gov/policy/aviation-policy/licensing/US-carriers>

97 US air carriers with a CPCN

- Does not include DBA relationships

No publicly available list of foreign air carriers with economic authority

Airline	Certificate	Type	Status	City	State	Effective Date	Expiration Date	Authority	Notes
Allegiant Air	1215	Domestic	Active	Las Vegas	Nevada	03/11/2011	03/11/2021	1215	
Allegiant Air	1215	Domestic	Active	Las Vegas	Nevada	03/11/2011	03/11/2021	1215	
Allegiant Air	1215	Domestic	Active	Las Vegas	Nevada	03/11/2011	03/11/2021	1215	
Allegiant Air	1215	Domestic	Active	Las Vegas	Nevada	03/11/2011	03/11/2021	1215	
Allegiant Air	1215	Domestic	Active	Las Vegas	Nevada	03/11/2011	03/11/2021	1215	

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Legislated Responsibilities – NTSB



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What about accidents that do not fall under the Legacy Federal Family Assistance Legislation?

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“Legislated” vs. “Non-Legislated” Accidents

Legislated

- Support at Federal Level
 - NTSB and Federal Partners
- Support from Carrier
- Support from Red Cross

Non-Legislated

- Cannot count on support from NTSB, Federal Partners, Operator
- TDA tries to implement family assistance support working with local agencies and operator

City / County / State Responsibilities Remain the Same:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| • Incident Command | • Emergency Management / Logistic Support |
| • Victim Recovery & Identification | • Coordination with Other Agencies (NTSB, DOS) |
| • Personal Effects Management | • Disaster Relief Response & Support |

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Key Questions...

Important to understand the broader context of the family assistance response...

- Who is doing what?
- Who is required to do what?
- Where does my organization fit in?



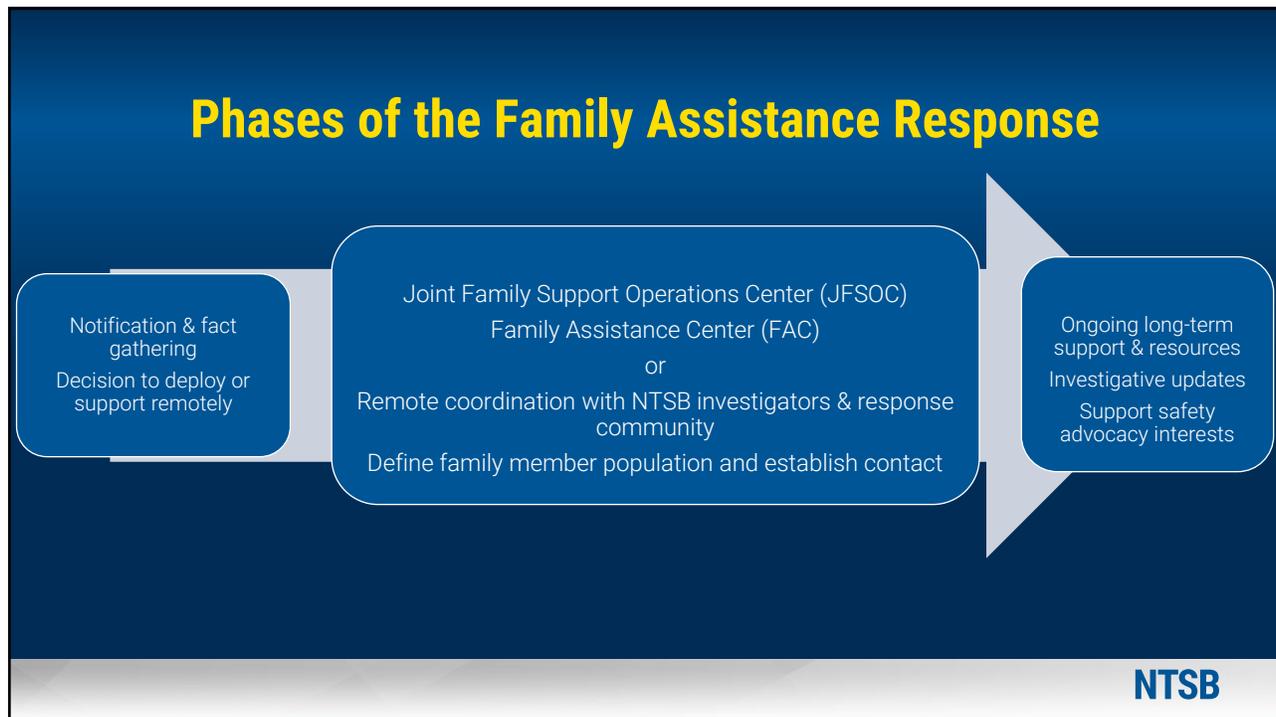
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The Joint Family Support Operations Center (JFSOC)

A central meeting location separate from the EOC where participating agency representatives are brought together to monitor, plan, coordinate, and execute a family assistance response operation

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Purpose of a JFSOC

Coordinate Family Assistance Operation

- Define overarching goals
- Define operational period objectives
- Determine frequency of and prepare for events (e.g., family briefings, site visit)
- Troubleshoot issues and identify resolutions
- Develop exit strategy

Unified Command / Interagency Coordination

- Ensure communication between agencies (e.g., multi-jurisdictional) and maintain situational awareness
- Identify needs, gaps, and duplication of services
- Identify appropriate agencies to provide services
- Unified approach to addressing family member requests

Monitor On-Going Family Support Activities

- Daily status reports from participating agencies
- Identify appropriate agencies to provide services
- Coordinate and manage on-going family member requests
- Address scalability and accessibility

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JFSOC Meetings

Organizational Meeting

Daily Progress Meetings

Briefing Prep.

Operation-specific meetings (as needed)

- Site visit
- Personal effects management
- Memorial planning

Assurance Review Meeting

- NTSB, Carrier and ARC participate

Close-Out Meeting

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Family Assistance Center

“Long-term” operation

Orland, CA
Motorcoach Highway Accident
Veterans Memorial Hall

Safe and secure gathering place

Lockhart, TX
Hot Air Balloon Accident
Church Banquet Hall

Central location for family members to receive information and access to services

Jacksonville, FL
Shipping Vessel Sinking
Hotel & Union Hall

Not necessarily the same location where families are housed

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Family Assistance Center Services



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Family Briefing Basics

Scheduled, organized & formal

Communicate current & accurate info

In-person, web- and/or tele-conference

- Language interpretation

Key officials from relevant agencies

Q & A session

Types of Briefings:

- Initial (BM/IIC/Deputy IIC), in-phase (BM/IIC/Deputy IIC/ TDA), close-out (TDA)
- May include other agencies
- NTSB may not be first to brief

Audience

Crew

Passengers

Family of Survivors

Family of Fatalities

Designated support people

No media or attorneys

One briefing vs. separate briefings?

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Media Relations

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Why do we talk to the press?

Official source of independent accident information

Transparency fosters confidence

If we don't someone else will

Manage rumors and leaks

Briefings occur minimally once a day

NTSB media activities for Asiana 214

- On-scene media presence for 7 days
- 7 media briefings
- 86 tweets in 10 days
- 100+ interviews

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What do we talk about?

Factual information

- Vehicle recorder readouts
- Measurements & specific times of accident events
- Contents of interviews

Never speculate

- Is it possible...
- Could that mean...

Never release:

- Names of passengers (crew names may appear in some documents)
- Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) audio

Monitor coverage & respond to inaccuracies by contacting reporter/media outlet to clarify and/or request correction

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Key Points for Interacting with Media During NTSB Investigations

NTSB is sole source of information regarding accident investigation.

Ok to brief media on organization's actions in response to an accident.

Avoid discussing cause of the accident.

Communicators encouraged to contact
NTSB Media Relations to coordinate
messaging.

NTSB Media Relations Division
202-314-6100
NTSBmediarelations@NTSB.gov

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Contact Transportation Disaster Assistance Division

assistance@ntsb.gov
202-314-6290

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