



Safety Recommendation(s)

The objective of a safety investigation is to identify and reduce safety-related risk

Date: February 6, 2019

In reply refer to: SI-18-00030

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The Air Accident Investigation Department (AAID) is mandated by the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation to investigate and determine probable cause(s) of air transportation accidents and incidents, issue safety recommendation(s)¹ to prevent similar accidents or incidents from occurring, study transportation safety issues and evaluate the safety effectiveness of agencies and stakeholders involved in air transportation.

The following information is provided to urge your organization to take action on the safety recommendation(s) in this letter. The AAID is vitally interested in any action taken on these recommendation(s) because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives.

The recommendation(s) contained here involves runway conditions, crash and rescue readiness and emergency personnel qualification and availability at the Rock Sound International Airport in Rock Sound, Eleuthera, Bahamas. These recommendation(s) are derived from the AAID's investigation of the accident involving a Cessna C421B aircraft (file number A18-000009), which occurred on 5th June, 2018, at Rock Sound Int'l Airport, Rock Sound, Eleuthera, Bahamas. These recommendation(s) are supported by the evidence that were found and the analysis performed.

While the conditions that are the focus of these recommendation(s) were not directly contributory to the accident investigated, they were identified as safety concerns that can have a serious impact on other aircraft using this airport and the serious consequences a future accident or incident can have if the conditions identified are not rectified in a timely manner.

As a result of this investigation, the following observation and recommendation(s) are made to the Bahamas Civil Aviation Authority (BCAA):

Findings:

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An audit report was previously prepared by inspectors of the Safety Oversight Department (SOD) and presented for resolution to the BCAA on November 29th, 2017 outlining the safety concerns observed

¹ In accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation, International Standards and Recommended Practices, Chapter 6, Paragraph 6.8 and the Bahamas Civil Aviation (Investigations of Air Accidents and Incidents) Amendment Regulations 1.460(a) "At any stage of the investigation of an accident or incident, the AAID shall, in a dated transmittal correspondence recommend to the appropriate authorities, including those in other States, those persons or organizations of the aviation community that have a direct interest in the safety issue that was the basis for the safety recommendation as well as to other members of the aviation community who would benefit from the information, any preventive action that the AAID considers necessary to be taken promptly to enhance aviation safety."

at the Rock Sound Int'l Airport. The AAID during the investigation of the accident involving aircraft N421MM on June 5th, 2018 uncovered the same conditions noted by the SOD audit team.

While it is understood and generally accepted that the conditions uncovered are not directly the responsibility of the BCAA to undertake and correct, it is however, recognized that as the regulatory authority for aviation in the Bahamas, the BCAA has the oversight responsibility to ensure the entity charge with the operational responsibility, carry out corrective actions to reduce / mitigate the hazards found at this airport.

Chiefly among the concerns that requires urgent attention are;

- Pavement, runway hold short markings and runway markings are faded and in most cases non-existent, this is critical as airmen not familiar with this airfield are likely to commit errors which can lead to runway incursions or other errors that can be catastrophic.
- The pavement is “fair to poor” as assessed by the aerodrome inspection department and also observed as a safety concern by the AAID investigation team. There are “copious amounts of voids and irregularities along the entire runway surface.” This condition can result in a catastrophic event as airmen can be challenged in maintaining directional control of their aircraft during take-off and landing. This condition is exacerbated during times of precipitation as puddles can form, due to lack of proper drainage, obscuring these voids and creating a more dangerous condition for the aircraft and its occupants.
- Only one fireman was available and on duty during the visit by the AAID investigation team. As the airport is open 7 days a week, sunrise to sunset, this is a serious safety and human factors concern. Should an accident or incident occur during the time the fireman is not on duty, this can be a very serious condition.
- There are no qualification records outlining initial or recurrent training for the fireman stationed at this airport.
- While there are 2 – 300 pound fire extinguishing bottles positioned at the terminal, there is no vehicle to transport the fire bottles to any other area of the ramp or the runway area, should an accident or incident requiring firefighting equipment and assistance occur and they are required.
- The fire truck stationed at the airport has not been in service for more than 10 years. While aircraft operated by the national flag carrier, (ATR 42 and 72), many corporate jets and other Bahamas scheduled airlines use this airport on a daily basis, with, in many cases, as many as 70 passengers, it is advisable that some sort of fire extinguishing vehicle or apparatus, (with the capacity to handle the largest size aircraft that use this aerodrome), be made available at the airport and manned by qualified personnel.

As a result of this investigation, the AAID has issued eight (8) safety recommendations; these recommendations, based on the conditions noted above, were addressed specifically to the entity that has the responsibility to take corrective action(s) and are listed here for informational purposes.

- (2) recommendations are addressed to the Safety Oversight Department (SOD) of the BCAA;
- (5) recommendations are addressed to the Airport Authority (AA); and
- (1) recommendation is addressed to the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation (MOTA)

Recommendation

To the Bahamas Civil Aviation Authority, Safety Oversight Department:

As the BCAA has no responsibility for the conduct of operations at the Rocksound Airport, it does have regulatory oversight of aerodromes in the Bahamas and responsibility to ensure the entity Airport Authority (AA), charged with aerodrome daily operational activities in the Bahamas, formulate corrective action plans to address these findings and mitigate hazards.

The AAID therefore issues the following recommendation:

1. Recommends the BCAA ensure follow-up surveillance is conducted of the Rock Sound Int'l Airport to verify the findings uncovered have been addressed.
2. It is recommended that the BCAA conduct initial and follow-up inspections of all other airports under their surveillance obligation in a structured and timely manner to ensure their compliance to requirements of the CAGR and international standards as applicable. Inspections should verify that;
 - Where applicable, adequate firefighting equipment are available and functioning.
 - Adequate personnel are available to accomplish firefighting/crash and rescue obligations (if applicable).
 - Personnel assigned to firefighting / crash and rescue tasks are qualified and current in their firefighting / crash and rescue tasks (as applicable).
 - Records are available reflecting qualification and currency of firefighting / crash and rescue personnel (if applicable).
 - Proper runway and taxiway markings are installed at airports under their surveillance responsibility.

The above recommendation(s) are hereby classified as "**Open –await response²**"

The AAID would appreciate a response from you within 90 days addressing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendation(s). In your response to the recommendation(s) in this letter, please refer to safety recommendation(s) by number. Recommendation(s) SI-18-00031-34 have been consolidated and combined under SI-18-00030. If you need additional information you may call 397-5513 or 397-5509.

Regards



Delvin R. Major
Chief Investigator of Air Accidents

Cc: Mr. Dionisio D'Aguilar Minister – Tourism and Aviation
 Mrs. Julie Brathwaite-Rolle – Manager Safety Oversight Department

² **Open – Await Response** – When a safety recommendation is issued, the status "Open – Await Response" automatically assigned. In the case of a recommendation that supersedes an existing recommendation, the AAID may decide to carry over the status of the superseded recommendation to the new recommendation.