



Friday, March 7, 2008

NTSB To Hold Hearing on Cosco Busan Accident

The National Transportation Safety Board will hold a two-day public hearing as part of its ongoing investigation into the accident in which the 901-foot container ship *M/V Cosco Busan* spilled about 55,000 gallons of fuel oil after striking the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. The hearing will convene at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2008, at the NTSB's Board Room and Conference Center, 429 L'Enfant Plaza, SW., Washington, D.C.

"This hearing will give us a good opportunity to learn what happened that day, how it happened, and about the systems and procedures that might have prevented such an accident from occurring in the first place," said NTSB Chairman Mark V. Rosenker who will chair the hearing.

At about 8:00 a.m. PST on November 7, 2007, the Hong Kong-flagged *Cosco Busan* departed the Port of Oakland in foggy conditions with a San Francisco Bay Bar Pilot on the bridge directing the navigation of the vessel. At about 8:30 a.m., the ship, destined for Busan, Korea, struck the fendering system at the base of one of the bridge's supporting towers. Damage to the vessel caused a breach in two of the ship's fuel tanks, which resulted in the oil spill. Preliminary property damage and environmental clean-up costs are estimated to exceed \$60 million.

The meeting will focus on the following issues: the *Cosco Busan's* Safety Management System and navigation equipment operability, accident notification and initial spill assessment, role of the Vessel Traffic Service, and state pilotage oversight.

Among those expected to testify are witnesses from the U.S. Coast Guard, California Department of Fish and Game, San Francisco Bar Pilots Association, Fleet Management Limited (operators of the *Cosco Busan*), California Board of Pilot Commissioners, American Pilots Association, and Sperry Marine.

Chairman Rosenker Prepares for Cosco Busan Hearing



To prepare himself as chairman of the Board of Inquiry for the *Cosco Busan* public hearing, which the Safety Board voted to hold by a 5-0 vote, Chairman Mark Rosenker visited the site of the accident, rode a containership along the route of the *Cosco Busan*, and visited several parties to the investigation, including the mayor of San Francisco. This picture, taken aboard the Coast Guard Cutter *Hawksbill*, shows the Chairman with Captain Wheatley, Commander Wood, and Captain Gugg of Coast Guard Sector San Francisco.

NTSB Participates in African American Pioneers Family Day

On Saturday, February 23, Beverly Drake, Aviation Accident Investigator (AS-20) represented the NTSB at the National Air and Space Museum's African-American Pioneers Day, an event designed to teach children and their parents about historic and modern day black aviation and space professionals. Beverly spoke about her experiences as the first black woman military/commercial pilot in the Caribbean, and her work here at the NTSB as the first black woman aviation accident investigator/analyst. She was joined by NASA Astronaut, Col. B. Alvin Drew, four black U.S. Air Force fighter pilots, members of the Organization of Black Airline Pilots and representatives of the World War II all black unit, the Tuskegee Airmen. Dee Pettus (CFO-1) and Bridget Serchak (PA) assisted Bev with staffing an NTSB booth as part of the daylong program that included video and photographic highlights of past investigations, a cockpit voice recorder, and literature about the Board's history and mission.



Bridget Serchak, Beverly Drake and Dee Pettus at the NTSB booth

Chairman Rosenker Addresses Group on Intelligent Transportation



Chairman Mark Rosenker spoke to the Executive Board of the Intelligent Transportation Society of America about the importance of vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure technology in reducing crashes in all modes of transportation. He said we can trace the decline in commercial aviation accidents rates to the introduction of electronic safety devices and that it will be technology that can help to prevent runway incursions. He noted that positive train control could prevent train collisions and overspeed accidents by requiring automatic control systems to override mistakes made by human operators. He also said about 48 percent of accidents could be prevented by rear-end or run-off-the-road and lane change collision warning systems. He further remarked it was important to find a way to reduce the 43,000 motor vehicle deaths each year and that technology was the way of the future. Elaine Weinstein, Bridget Serchak, Pat Cariseo, Julie Perrot, Shane Lack and Dan Bower assisted in the preparation of the remarks and background information. Elaine, Bridget, and Shane accompanied the Chairman to ITS-A.

Member Hersman Addresses Fire Services Officers School

Member Debbie Hersman addressed the 21st Annual Fire Services Officers School held in Owensboro, KY, on February 24. The event was attended by over 1,200 firefighters and was hosted by the Green River Firefighters Association and KCTCS State Fire Commission/Fire Rescue Training. Member Hersman gave a slide presentation about the Comair 5191 accident investigation and recognized the cooperation of first responders in the Board's accident investigation. She discussed the Board's processes and the role of first responders and local governments in an NTSB accident investigation.

Member Higgins and AS Staff Visit HAI's "Heli-Expo" in Houston



Last month, the NTSB was well represented at the world's largest gathering of helicopter operators and manufacturers. Dubbed as "Heli-Expo," the annual event occurred at the convention center in Houston, Texas, and was hosted by the Helicopter Association International (HAI). This year's Heli-Expo was the largest on record, with 17,373 participants at the show, 523 exhibitors showcasing products and services during the event, and 65 helicopters displayed on the showroom floor.

Member Kitty Higgins, regional air safety investigators and HQ specialists participated in several technical and safety seminars geared towards helicopter safety. Additionally, the NTSB co-hosted the Electronic News Gathering (ENG) Helicopter Safety Roundtable to discuss issues related to last year's fatal midair collision between two news helicopters over Phoenix. The roundtable discussion provided an excellent venue for improving safety in that segment of the helicopter industry.

This year also marked the first time that the NTSB participated in an exhibit that promoted helicopter accident prevention. Member Higgins was joined by Jeff Guzzetti (AS-2R), Ron Price (AS-40), Clint Johnson (Alaska), Kristi Dunks (LA), Howard Plagens (LA), Tom Latson (Texas), Leah Yeager (Texas), Tim Lebaron (Texas), and Jason Aguilera (Texas). The NTSB's significant presence was very well received.

Member Higgins visit's the NTSB's inaugural exhibit at the 2008 Heli-Expo event in Houston. Pictured left to right: Jeff Guzzetti, Kristi Dunks, Member Higgins, Clint Johnson, Ron Price, Tom Latson.

Chairman Rosenker Receives Honorary US Power Squadrons Membership

Chairman Mark Rosenker, assisted by Bill Gossard (SRA), addressed more than 650 persons at the 2008 Annual Conference of the United States Power Squadrons (USPS) in Dallas, Texas, on February 23, 2008. The Chairman spoke about the strong partnership between the USPS and the Safety Board in advancing the Board's Most Wanted State recreational boating safety issues—mandatory recreational boating safety education and the wearing of life jackets by children ages 12 and under. After Chairman Rosenker's remarks, USPS Chief Commander Ernie Marshburn, SN, presented him with 2 USPS burgees (pennants), one for the Chairman's office and one to fly on any vessel he is operating. Additionally, Chairman Rosenker was presented an honorary membership in the United States Power Squadrons and a plaque for his dedicated support of recreational boating safety.

