

I am sure that the witnesses will give us further details on how these groups perform their functions.

Earlier this month in response to my request, Chairman O'Connell of the National Transportation Safety Board, summarized his Board's progress as to three accidents which occurred this spring, and set forth the routine which is followed in every case where there is a necessity to determine probable cause. You will find this letter in the July 11 Congressional Record (p. H8463). I believe the clerk of our committee has some copies of this available for distribution.

(The letter referred to follows:)

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD,  
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN,  
Washington, D.C., July 7, 1967.

HON. HARLEY O. STAGGERS,  
*Chairman, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CONGRESSMAN: In accordance with your request, the Board is more than happy to bring you up to date on the status of three commercial airline accidents which occurred in the past few months and in which your Committee has expressed a particular interest.

In addition, this letter will serve to review again with you, for your benefit and for the benefit of your Committee, the procedures the Board follows in connection with the investigation and reporting of results in aviation accidents of this type.

1. *Air collision at Urbana, Ohio, involving TWA DC-9 and a Beechcraft Baron B-55, privately owned, March 9, 1967.*—Since our last progress report to you in connection with this case, the detailed field investigation has been completed; an extensive public hearing was held in Dayton, Ohio, on June 6-8, 1967; and we are presently receiving comments and suggestions from interested parties who have, under our rules, thirty days from the date of the hearings in which to submit them.

2. *Delta Airlines training flight crash at New Orleans, Louisiana, March 30, 1967.*—The field investigation has been completed and a public hearing has been scheduled to begin in New Orleans on July 19, 1967. The hearing will be presided over by Member Oscar Laurel of this Board, and at that time all of the known or ascertainable facts will become a matter of public record. It is expected that the hearing will not last more than two days.

3. *Lake Central Airlines, accident near Marseilles, Ohio, March 5, 1967.*—The field investigation in this case has been completed and a public hearing is scheduled to be held in Indianapolis, Indiana, commencing on August 2, 1967. In this case, too, the hearing is expected to reveal all of the known and ascertainable facts and to point the way toward corrective action if such has not already in fact been instituted.

I am sure you are quite familiar with the investigative process of the Board in aircraft accidents of the sort we have been discussing, but it might be well to restate it for the record.

The investigation of civil aircraft accidents is now the responsibility of the National Transportation Safety Board. This responsibility, with a staff of experienced air safety investigators, was recently transferred to us from the Civil Aeronautics Board under the provisions of the Department of Transportation Act, but the function had been exercised by the CAB from 1940 until the recent transfer to us.

The practice has always been to organize a team of experts in the various technical areas that might be involved in any such accident, under the leadership of trained investigators representing the National Transportation Safety Board. After as exhaustive a field investigation as the situation requires and permits, the Board schedules and holds a public hearing at or near the site of the accident. At this stage of the process, all interested parties, such as the airline concerned; the Federal Aviation Administration; air line employees associations; air-frame manufacturers; engine manufacturers; and any other possible interested parties, are active participants in adding to and thus developing a complete record of all the known or ascertainable facts.