Shortly before the end of 2010 the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington, DC issued two recommendations. They concerned (a) helicopter hover performance charts and (b) operating standards for firefighting operations.

**In the first document the Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:**

- Require that the hover performance charts published by helicopter manufacturers reflect the true performance of the helicopter in all conditions for which the charts are applicable, including light and variable wind conditions. (A-10-148)

- Develop and implement a surveillance program specifically for 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 135 operators with aircraft that can operate both as public aircraft and as civil aircraft to maintain continual oversight ensuring compliance with 14 CFR Part 135 requirements. (A-10-149)

- Take appropriate actions to clarify Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) authority over public aircraft, as well as identify and document where such oversight responsibilities reside in the absence of FAA authority. (A-10-150)

- Require the installation of fuel tanks that meet the requirements of 14 Code of Federal Regulations 29.952 on S-61 helicopters that are used for passenger transport. (A-10-151) Require that S-61 helicopters that are used for passenger transport be equipped with passenger seats and seat mounting structures that provide substantial improvement over the requirements of Civil Air Regulations 7.260, such as complying
Require operators of transport-category helicopters to equip all passenger seats with restraints that have an appropriate release mechanism that can be released with minimal difficulty under emergency conditions. (A-10-153)

Require that Advisory Circular 21-34 be used to evaluate all shoulder harness retrofit installations and to determine that the installations reduce the risk of occupant injury. (A-10-154)

Require operators of Sikorsky S-61 helicopters with General Electric model CT58-140 engines to install 10-micron airframe fuel filters. (A-10-155)

Require Carson Helicopters, Inc., to put a conspicuous notification on the title page of the Instructions for Continuing Airworthiness that accompany its supplemental type certificate for installing side-mounted seats indicating that the installation does not provide enhanced occupant protection over that provided by the originally installed seats and meets Civil Air Regulations 7.260 standards. (A-10-156)

Require all applicants for supplemental type certificate (STC) seat installations in any type of aircraft to put a conspicuous notification on the title page of the Instructions for Continuing Airworthiness that accompany the STC indicating whether the installation provides enhanced occupant protection over that provided by the originally installed seats and the certification standard level met by the seating system. (A-10-157)

Require supplemental type certificate (STC) applicants to improve the crashworthiness design of the seating system, such as complying with portions of 14 Code of Federal
Regulations 29.561 and 29.562, when granting STC approval for older transport-category rotorcraft certificated to Civil Air Regulations 7.260 standards. (A-10-158)

Also, the National Transportation Safety Board reiterates the following previously issued recommendation to the Federal Aviation Administration:

- Do not permit exemptions or exceptions to the flight recorder regulations that allow transport-category rotorcraft to operate without flight recorders, and withdraw the current exemptions and exceptions that allow transport-category rotorcraft to operate without flight recorders. (A-06-18)

Secondly, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the U.S. Forest Service:

- Develop mission-specific operating standards for firefighter transport operations that include procedures for completing load calculations and verifying that actual aircraft performance matches predicted performance, require adherence to aircraft operating limitations, and detail the specific 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 135 regulations that are to be complied with by its contractors. (A-10-159)

- Require its contractors to conduct firefighter transport operations in accordance with the mission-specific operating standards specified in Safety Recommendation A-10-159. (A-10-160)

- Create an oversight program that can reliably monitor and ensure that contractors comply with the mission-specific operating requirements specified in Safety Recommendation A-10-159. (A-10-161)
• Provide specific training to inspector pilots on performance calculations and operating procedures for the types of aircraft in which they give evaluations. (A-10-162)

• Require a hover-out-of-ground-effect power check to be performed before every takeoff carrying passengers from helispots in confined areas, pinnacles, and ridgelines. (A-10-163)

• Review and revise policies regarding the type and use of gloves by firefighting personnel during transport operations, including but not limited to, compatibility with passenger restraints and opening emergency exits. (A-10-164)

• Review and revise contract requirements for passenger transport by aircraft so that the requirement to install shoulder harnesses on passenger seats provides improved occupant crashworthiness protection consistent with the seat design. (A-10-165)

• Require that helispots have basic weather instrumentation that has the capability to measure wind speed and direction, temperature, and pressure and provide training to helitack personnel in the proper use of this instrumentation. (A-10-166)

• Modify the standard manifest form to provide a place to record basic weather information and require that this information be recorded for each flight. (A-10-167)

• Require all contracted transport-category helicopters to be equipped with a cockpit voice recorder and a flight data recorder or a cockpit image recorder with the capability of recording cockpit audio, crew communications, and aircraft parametric data. (A-10-168).